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COMMODORE USER

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VIRGIN CHALLENGER II
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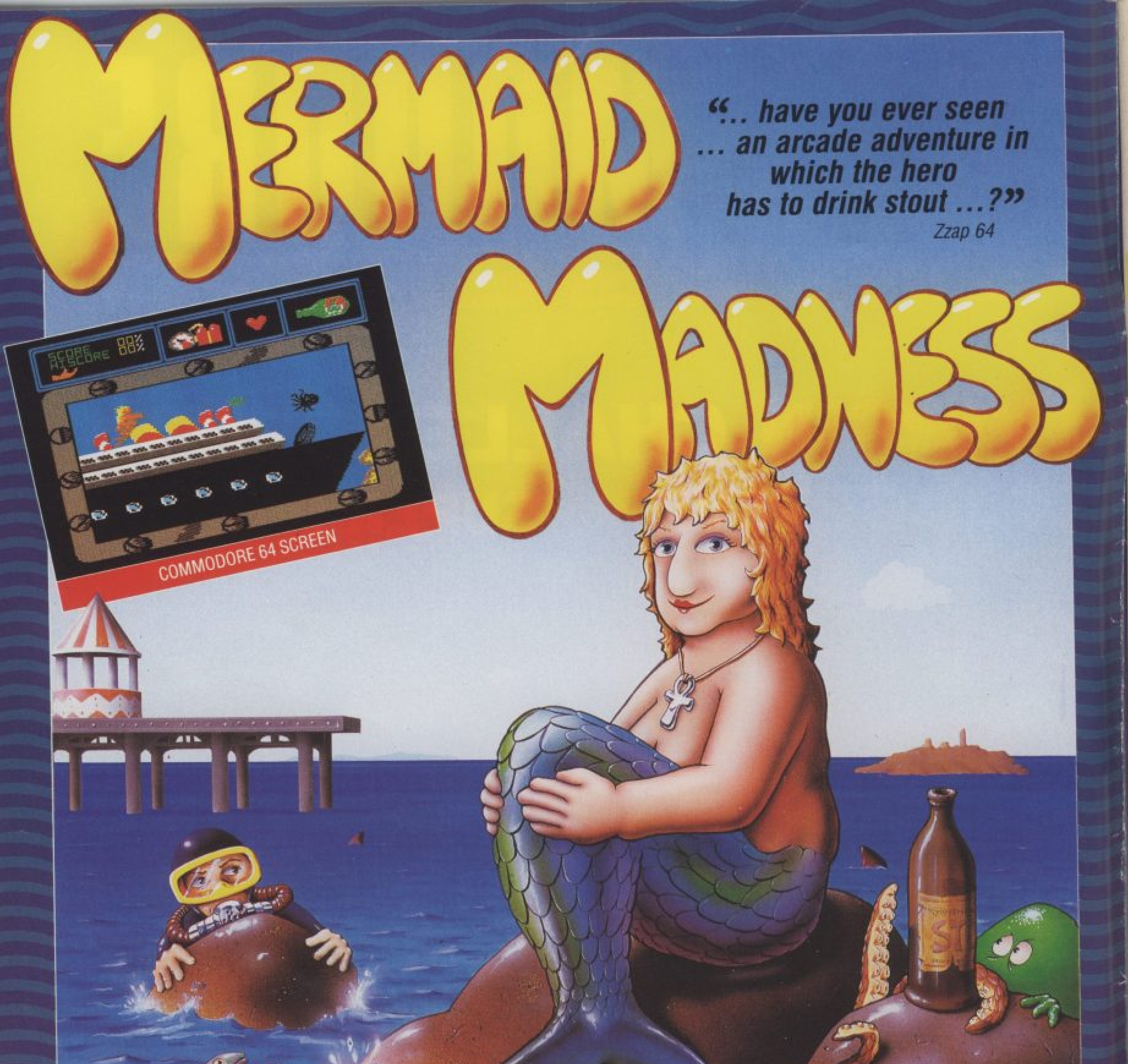


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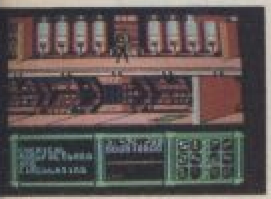
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SPECIALS



REGULARS



SCREEN SCENE



Ghosts 'n' Goblins — Screen Star



Tau Ceti — Screen Star

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Letters

Real bugs

I thought I'd take a few minutes off from *Alternate Reality* to drop you a line. Firstly, I think the game is the best role player game as yet seen on the UK market. Unfortunately, it's full of bugs. They're so bad on one point that I had to reset 33 times in a sixteen hour session of frustration.

U.S. Gold said it was all due to it being made for the 64 and not the 128 but I've proved them wrong: it crashes on either machine. I for one would like them to give me a good copy because I actually like the game. The bugs are as follows — maybe other readers will back me up.

The sun turns into a big flashing square. The description line below your experience line often gets a white cursor on it which blanks out some of the description words. A white square forms beside the picture whilst playing. When you have filled up with potions i.e. protection + a further quaff will crash the game. Also when you buy six or more rounds in a tavern the lower half of the screen crashes and a jumble of symbols appear for a split second before resorting back to normal.

Malcolm Harnden,
Stamford, Lincs.

P.S. If anyone reading this is playing *Starglobe 3* the PBM game, visit me at Leree for some interesting weapons or support items for Colfacs/Colonies. Captain Pasimov.

Strange request

Help! I bought a Commodore Plus/4 for Christmas, and returned the Guarantee Card, and they just sent me as a free gift a sofware cartridge called *Strange Odyssey* and once I get out of the Spaceship I come to a dead end. So as I read through the very basic instructions, I see there is a hint book to help decipher messages and clues, so I got in touch with Commodore at Corby, they gave me a phone number, but the firm is now out of business. So Corby suggested I contact a magazine to see if someone could help me. So please can you tell me where I can obtain a hint book. May I also say thank you for a great mag and keep up the good work.

J.A. Brown,
Taunton, Somerset.

Can anyone help out there?

Super Bowlsup

I recently bought the American Football game *Super Bowl* by Ocean. It's a great game, much easier to play than the other American Football games on the market which I have. *Super Bowl* has good graphics and sound and music — overall a good game for the money.

But I have discovered a couple of problems. You can only score points up to 99 for your highest score, and when you play for the team going up the screen a field goal or extra point attempt fails because the ball never goes through the uprights. It always falls short.

If you score more than 99 then your score goes back to zero. I found this out when I played against the computer. In the third quarter I was Bears 99 and the computer was Patriots with 21 points. I scored three more touchdowns and three more extra points, the Patriots scored one more touch down and one more extra point which should have made the final score Bears 119, Patriots 28 but the total I got was 19-28!

Did the programmer make a mistake or didn't he expect any one to score more than 99 plus against the computer? Is there anything we can put in at the start of a game before we load the main program to make the game total the points over 99 plus?

This is the way I played the game to score more than 99 plus points I played the same offence right the way through the game.

first menu RUSH PLAY
second menu I FORMATION
third menu SET RECEIVER the last player of the (I FORMATION).
third menu MENU
fourth menu PLAY GAME
I played the same defence 4-2-5

21-marked-22	53-marked-69
23-marked-25	63-marked-64
35-marked-88	73-marked-54
38-marked-81	95-marked-10
91-marked-71	55-marked-71

I used no power on the kick off then moved my players to the ball to get a 1st down 12 yards.

M.S. Jupp,
Hove, East Sussex.

Elite excuse

Thank you for your excellent review of our Silver game *Thrust* in the May issue of *Commodore User*. I am writing, however, concerning Fred Reid's review of *Empire* which appeared in the same issue.

I would like to know who, at Firebird, told him that *Empire* was ". . . a cure for bored Elitists"?

Empire is *not* a cure for bored Elitists. We have gone to great lengths with reviewers, and with the style of the advertising, to stress that *Empire* is not supposed to be *Elite II*.

Anyone who plays *Empire* will find that the game-play, graphics, objectives, and style of the game place it quite apart from anything else on the market. Given the detailed nature of Mr Reid's review, and the many good points which he has to make about the game, I wonder what he would have concluded had the game been from a different publisher, or even (Heaven forbid!) had 'Elite' never seen the light of day.

Sorry about the gripe. The mag's usually brill!

Phil Pratt,
Marketing Manager, Firebird Software.

Fred's review would have been the same whoever published it, and we stick by his comments Phil.

Turbo 16

I read your magazine every month. But in the May issue of CU I noticed that in your Letters pages some readers asked if there was a turbo-load program for the C16.

Well, there is one company called Supersoft who sell a turbo load program at £6.95 and the phone number is as follows: 01-861 1166.

I hope you are now pleased that your problem is solved.

Justin Hutchings,
Leamington Spa.

Poster plea

This humble letter is for Eugene Lacey, Bohdan Buciak, Mike (Hot Shots, Porsche fanatic or is it No. 64 Routemaster bus?) Pattenden.

Anyway, your 'mag' is absolutely "**BRILL**" and now it's had a facelift, "FANTASTIC"! Shame it has to go up to a pound, but let's face it it'll be worth every penny of it. Does this glamorous new look and extra freebie's have anything to do with my previous letter in Feb? (*what letter? — Ed*). Anyway keep up the good work and show those twerps at *Zzap! (now, now — Ed.)* what *Commodore User* is made of.

How about chucking in a free poster from time to time? Every

Letters, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

other mag has one sometimes. Get a guy called Christopher Foss to draw some up for you. He is a fantastic sci-fi artist. He designed the spaceship *Nostromo* from the film *ALIEN*.
Richard Gibbons,
Stranraer, Wigtownshire.
Your suggestions are duly noted.

Jim fan

Star Letter

Who is Uncle Jim? The man is a genius. At the end of this century we will number him among the world's most gifted men. Einstein, Eddison, Benz, Rutherford . . . Uncle Jim.

How can I join his Commodore Club in order to be privy to the great man's innermost ideas? The customised doorbell was nice, but SQUID was inspired, Commodore owners have been waiting for years for something as useless as this to attach to their micros.

I have myself been working on a music system for the 64 for the last eighteen months. It involves interfacing a mouth organ and a Wurlitzer jukebox via the joystick ports but I've run into one or two problems with ROM though. Will SQUID override this or am I an idiot? Please don't print my name because I don't want everyone to know I'm a berk.
Julian Tovey,
Liverpool.
Name and address witheld by request.

Star Letter

Puny game

Myself, my cousin and lots of my friends who all own Commodore 16 computers have all bought the Mr. Puniverse computer game by Mastertronic. We all find on playing it that when you get about 7 vitamin pills the game just crashes. So there is no way at all that you can ever win the game because you have got to get 25 pills to win. This takes all the enjoyment out of playing it. Can you please find out if this is supposed to happen or are they faulty or pirated games. Thankyou.
Charles Cornaby,
Hants.
Mastertronic say there was an early version which had a bug. Somehow it sounds as if you've got hold of one. Change it or frame it!

Arcade Asteroids

My story is of sad and old
About a game you will be told
A game that is devoid of droids
The vintage game of Asteroids

For years I've searched high and low
To find the game that I love so
Making do with *Exploding Fist*
Can cause a boy to go round the twist

I wish to inquire, if not plea
For the name of a software company
That will duly provide, for a fee
That magnificent piece of computer history.
David John,
Port Talbot

Ins and Outs

I disagree with the article A Fan Writes (June): the GForce and Mike Pattenden are 'brill'!! So if he doesn't like CU he can order Zzap 64 so he can have a laugh.

I also defend U.S. Gold, most of their games are worth £9.95, i.e. *Winter Games, Summer Games*, and their new game *World Cup* Carnival, looks to be worth £9.95. And their new budget games are well worth 3 'quid' so stay off U.S. Gold's back.

Here are the C96' and Plus/4's in's and out's:
In: Tony Kelly, Mastertronic, Good Games, CBM User, World Cup Carnival, Gremlin Graphics. *Out:* Brian Howarth, Gremlins, Invader Games, CBM Magazines that snub C16's and Plus/4's, Indoor Soccer, Software Houses that don't convert games, CBM Horizons and Zzap 64.
Niall McDermott,
Manchester.

More pocket money

I read and enjoy your mag. but in June's issue I read the letter section and most of the letters criticize the mag. Can't anyone praise it? Especially I read one where all the writer did was moan and criticize it. Why do they buy it?

The only thing I'd like to criticize is that the competitions are too hard for us younger readers to answer. So why don't you make different age sections? The mag is also quite expensive when companies you show expect you also to buy a computer game for around £10 when I only get £1.50 a week and I'm expected to buy your mag (which I don't mind) and buy a £10 game.

Mastertronic games are only £1.99 which I don't have so much trouble saving to buy but companies like U.S. Gold are greedy.
Darrell Pratt,
Holyhead, Gwynedd.

Must you go?

I have been an avid reader of C.U. since buying my first issue in March '84. I have since bought every issue and until a few months ago have thought it to be the best available for Commodore users. I would like to say that I agree with most of what D. Procida says in his letter of June '86.

I could once look forward to my C.U. being delivered, but it's gone downhill since introducing the following:-
1. Hot Shots (Shoot Mike Pattenden)
2. Uncle Jim's Club (Why not make him a grandad and retire him)
3. GForce (Send them to Libya. They can bore Gadaffi instead of me.

Why have you started reviewing games in more depth? They take too many pages. I would like to see more on the programming side i.e. Languages such as Pascal, using utilities to their best or an assembly language course.

Don't forget that we the readers pay your wages. I've seen a lot more criticism of C.U. in your letters than previously and there are other Commodore magazines who seem to have got their act together, namely *Your Commodore*. Now that you have changed the front cover try a facelift on the interior, it's in desperate need. I'll be buying C.U. for the next couple of months but if there's no change then I change. (To Y.C.)
Terry Waterhouse,
Rossendale, Lancs.
See you, Tel. You won't be wanting the T-shirt then.

Swift retort

After reading the letters from Daniel Procida, (June 1986) I felt I must write in defence of your excellent mag.

Firstly he says "who wants to know what Kevin Toms was doing in another mag." Well, (from what Mike "mine of information" Pattenden tells us) it was a nude centrefold and Daniel wanted posters of programmers (some perverted connection perhaps?)

Then he goes on (and on) to criticize "Kevin" McMahon (I could have sworn his name was Ken) and the way he "rips every programmer efforts to shreds". Ken gives praise where it is due, e.g. *Psi 5 Trading Co* and *Rasputin*, but when a piece of software as bad as *Death Wake* comes up it deserves to be ripped to shreds. As for thusands of readers shouting him down, they were probably complaining that he didn't burn every copy!

As for criticizing Mike Pattenden's Hot Shots column (which is, along with his witty reviews, the funniest bit in the mag) if we were all miserable, jumped-up little nerds like Daniel, what a jolly old life we'd live.

Lastly, to deal with the most incredibly stupid complaint I have ever heard in my life. The reason most, if not all, CU readers buy the magazine is for the games reviews so his idea of reducing the number of them is hardly going to be popular is it?

Keep up the good work, especially the C16 bits, and congrats. on the new image.
P.S. I thought of a brilliant idea for a Sigue Sigue Crudnik game. You line them up against a wall and blast hell out of them.
Darren Rogers,
Huyton, Merseyside.
Thank you for your well observed remarks Darren, Mike says he'll send you the tenner by return post.

Our letters bag is bulging with your comments, criticisms, queries and praise currently so we're expanding our letters page. Every letter printed gets a coveted Commodore User T-shirt, but we've added an extra incentive — the chance of winning a chart-topping game for the star letter of the month. So get your pen and paper out and write in to:

Letters, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London ECIR 3AU.

BUZZ

Commodore struggling



Commodore International has announced further losses for the last quarter amounting to £25 million and a further seventy redundancies at its Corby plant.

This comes on top of the reports earlier this year of its financial problems with the banks.

To make matters worse it's now becoming clear that the Amiga is unlikely to prove the popular successor to the 64 that Commodore hoped it would be, especially since it has been confirmed it will carry a hefty £1,700 price tag.

Its price puts it into the fiercely competitive small business micro market dominated by IBM and the dozens of clones based on it.

To give the Amiga a fighting chance Commodore have announced an add-on called *Sidecar* which will enable the Amiga to run standard PC software like Lotus 1-2-3 and dBase, though the announcement by Amstrad to put an IBM clone into the market for £500 won't do that package any favours.

Despite this, Commodore's U.K. boss Chris Kaday remains bullish about the Amiga. "We received tremendous response to the machine after launch."

He rejects the criticism that the machine has no proper slot in the market. "It will be bought by businesses, by companies who are particularly interested in graphics and by some home enthusiasts," he insisted.

Nevertheless the *Guardian* reported recently that only 50,000 Amigas have been sold worldwide. With a $40 million launch budget and enormous development costs that kind of turnover is unlikely to get them close to break-even.

Problems with the Amiga are unlikely to effect the owners of other Commodore computers.

Despite the company's financial difficulties they have just announced plans to improve their after-sales service for owners of the home machines.

Third-party computer repair outfit Verran Micro Maintenance Ltd of Camberley will handle all servicing of machines still under warranty, from July 1st.

In a press announcement Commodore stated that they hoped Verran would re-employ some of the staff just laid off to help set up the new servicing facility.

Press Baron

You don't have to be an Eddie Shah or a megawealthy Maxwell or Murdoch to run your own newspaper. All you really need is a Commodore 64, a printer and a snappy new piece of software called *The Newsroom*.

The Newsroom lets you create the pages of a newspaper, magazine, fanzine or whatever you like, and print it out page by page. You can create the banner for your paper, write the text, lay it out in columns on the page (there's a choice of three page sizes) and include illustrations.

The system comprises two disks, system disk and Clip Art disk, the latter holding hundreds of graphic illustrations which can be lifted out and incorporated into your page. The system is completely joystick and icon driven and looks like being simple to use.

There's also a 'wire service' facility for people with modems to transfer material to other computers — a 64, Apple II and even an IBM PC.

The Newsroom costs £39.95 (disk only) and is being distributed in the U.K. by Ariolasoft. It should be available by the beginning of August. Our stringer tells us Lou Grant of the L.A. Trib is already trying to get a copy. Look out next month for our exclusive review — tough luck Lou.

FACELIFT FOR 64

Commodore have announced a facelift for the ageing 64 in an attempt to boost its flagging position in the home computer market.

The revamp will only affect the machine's appearance though. It is to be rehoused in a shell similar, if not identical to the sleak, cream-coloured 128. An American software house is rumoured to have developed a fancy, icon-driven commands system for the 64, similar to the Gem system used by more expensive machines.

The 64 will not offer any extra memory or improvement in terms of sound and graphics, so it will at least, be 100% compatible with the old machine.

It is also expected that Commodore will offer the option of a $3\frac{1}{2}$ inch disk drive — the increasingly popular format used by the Amstrad and Commodore's own Amiga. This would replace the outdated and sluggish 1541 and 1570 disk drive.

The key question is that of price. With the Amstrad-Spectrum now selling at £130 the pressure is on Commodore to come up with an attractive package at a good price if it is to maintain its position in the market.

The most likely option is the standard marketing ploy of bundling the machine with a disk drive and cheap printer for around £400, though Commodore are being very tight-lipped about this.

The new-look 64 is scheduled for imminent launch in Germany, an should reach the U.K. later in the year.

FINAL REPLAY

The original *Final Cartridge* for the Commodore 64 should have been called the semi-final cartridge because it's just been enhanced and improved.

Major new features crammed in are the 'freezer' function which allows you to make personal back-up copies of your tapes or disks. Pirate tape copies beware — the cartridge must be in place when you load your back-ups.

There's also a sprite killer that cancels sprite collision detection (just like *Game Killer*) for those of you who'd rather cheat than break your joystick. And for real boffins, there's an improved machine-code monitor.

Add that to an impressive list of menu-driven functions that include toolkit and DOS commands, a Centronics interface, screen dump facility, preprogrammed function keys, disk/tape turbos and 24K of extra RAM and you've got what amounts to a real bargain for £45 — that's a fiver cheaper than the original version. More details from H and P Computers on 0376 511471.





Mastertronic goes 128

Good news for 128 owners who want to use their '128 mode' to play games — Mastertronic has started a cheapo range of 128 games on disk, costing just £4.99 each. The bad news is that the first two offerings, *Kikstart* and *The Last V8*, are merely 64 conversions.

Kikstart looks identical but seems to run slower — more like junior Kikstart. *The Last V8* has almost identical graphics, speech and sound but it does have an extra phase — you start on Mars and have to pick up 15 fuel rods before going back to Earth. The only real plus is very fast loading speed — if you've got a 1570 or 1571 drive. Can someone else do better (please)?



Here it is, the new look 64 (see story left)

Petspeed for 128: probably the first 'official' Basic compiler for the 64, Petspeed is now available for the 128. The new version supports the 128's Basic 7.0, is claimed to run compiled programs up to 40 times faster than Basic itself and uses the full 128K of memory — so who needs machine-code? Petspeed 128 is available from System Software of Oxford and costs a whopping £49.95 on disk. More details on 0865 54195.

Digidrum Mark 3: an enhanced version of the Digidrum drum machine for the Commodore 64 has just been announced by its U.K. distributors Syndromic Music. The good news for existing Digidrum owners is that you'll be able to get the software update for £14.95. Digidrum 3 itself costs £79.99. One of the main improvements is a new Editor which lets you swap and copy sounds as well as being able to mix two or more sounds together. More details on 01-883 1335.

Share your peripherals: If you've got two computers and only one set of peripherals, Hardworks Ltd may be able to solve your problem with the T-Switch. It's a device that links two Commodores (Vic, 16, 64, Plus/4) to one set of peripherals via the serial port. A switch determines which computer can access the printer or disk drive. It also incorporates a reset switch for the devices attached. T-Switch costs £24.50 and you can get more details on: 0493 764040.

More MPS ROMS: remember MPS Software, the people who do a replacement ROM chip to give the MPS 801 printer true descenders? Well, now they're offering three more replacement ROMs, each with a different font. There's 'Tech' (£14.95) which looks like the figures you get at the bottom of cheque books, there's 'Italic' (£14.96) and 'Sprint' (£14.95), a variation on the standard character set with straighter lines, less curves and true descenders. MPS Software are at: 17 Bowes Rd, London N13 AUX.

A Flash Of Genius!

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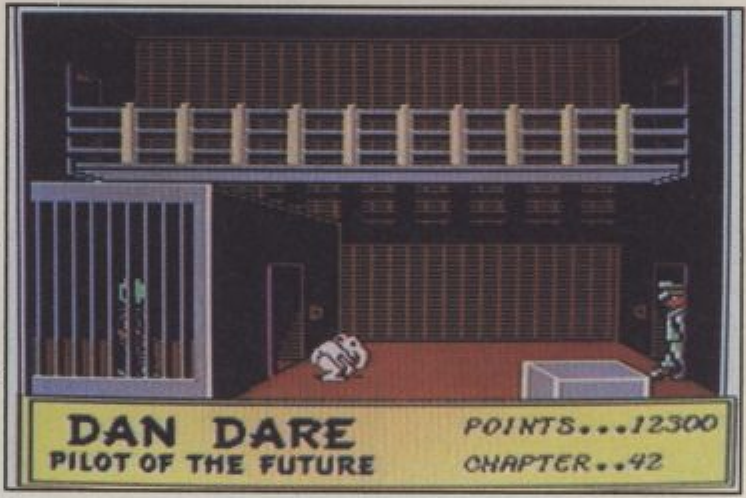
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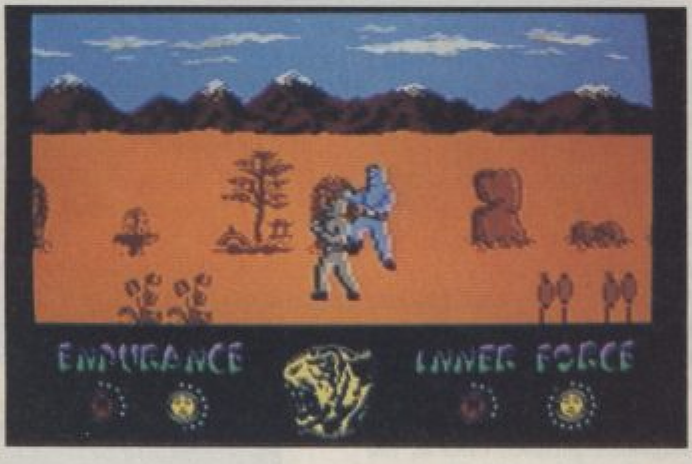


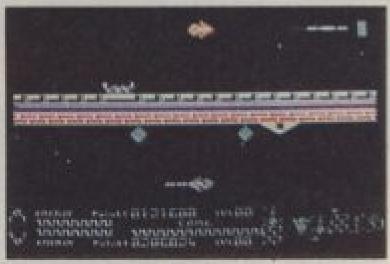
Dan Dare and Digby



Avid readers of the Eagle will know of the heroic exploits of Commander Dan Dare and his sidekick Digby in defending the earth from the designs of the evil Mekon. Virgin's game due out late this month features the erstwhile hero in another tangle with the nasty green alien who's attempting to colonize the earth.

Programmer Andy Wilson has attempted to keep to the original feel of the strip as much as possible as the screen shots show. The game is an arcade adventure but it plays in a style closer to a straight adventure by suggesting possible options. We're trying to get our hands on it even as you read this.





This is the viewscreen from Microprose's *Gunship*, due shortly. It promises to be the F-15 Strike Eagle for helicopter enthusiasts, with options for flying Search, Destroy, Rescue and Covert misions in an AH-64 Apache. Microprose boast revolutionary 3D graphics and terrain with real elevation and dynamic speed. Sounds pretty hairy.

Yet another oriental fighting game is due for release on the 64. Gremlin's *The Way of the Tiger* attracted plenty of praise when it first appeared on the Spectrum. a month or two back. *TWOT*, as it's affectionately known, features a number of different scenarios for fighting, including unarmed combat and weapons like poles and swords. There's plenty of variety and lots of gore, so we'll be ninjaing away with this one just as soon as we can.



This is a screen from Jeff Minter's latest game for the 64, *Iridis Alfa*. The game is a mix of two different sub games featuring an extremely cute droid, who turns himself into a fighter aircraft with devastating firepower. In other words it's a Jeff shoot 'em up special and there doesn't seem to be a Llama in sight until you look at the score line.

Allo', ca va mes copains, porquoi est-ce que je parle le franglais. C'est because the French sont invading. Mais oui! Le picture est taken from *Mandragore* a graphic adventure from Infogrames. Le game can be joue par four players avec each person trying to solve the Mystery of King Jorian. This mystery is contained in a grand chateau but to solve it on doit solve the mysteries surrounding neuf autres chateaux in the Land of Mandragore. Comprit? Bon un review suivit next ish, polish up on your franglais.



ACROJET

COMMODORE 64/128 MICROPROSE/ US GOLD

Price: £9.95/cass £14.95/disk

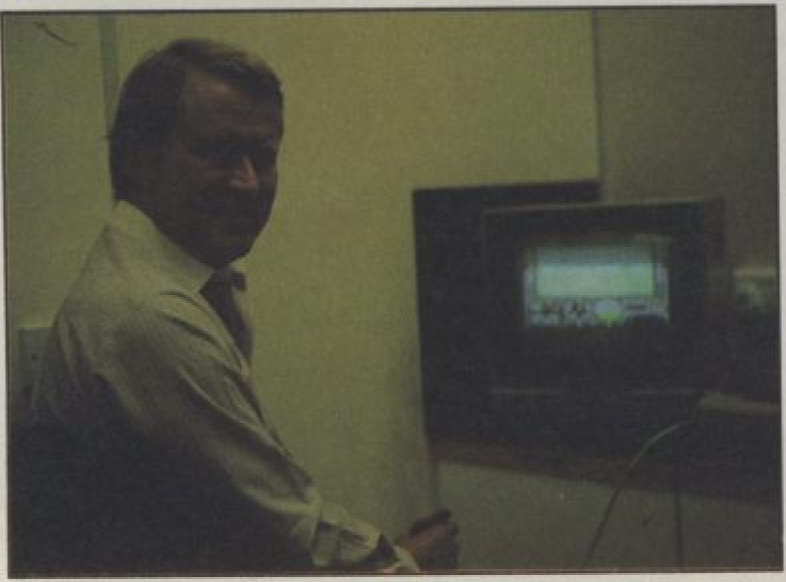
If you thought *Solo Flight* was a challenge, with its basic propeller-driven training plane, *Acrojet* provides even more thrills. It's an aerobatic simulator using the Jim Bede designed BD-5J plane. If that means nothing to you it's the aircraft James Bond flew through an aeroplane hangar in the film "Octopussy".

This is a very demanding plane to fly and it's been involved in at least 24 recorded accidents. And since I got hold of the simulator that has more than doubled. This simulator is one which really does live up to its real-life counterpart!

Being an aerobatic simulator, you're set a number of aerobatic competition events with varying degrees of difficulty. To help you, you're given a comprehensive flight instrument panel, as well as an outside 3-D view which shows not only the aeroplane but the runway and the various obstacles and gates you will have to negotiate during your competition manoeuvres.



Try the easiest manouevres first — simply fly around a set of five pylons as quickly as possible.

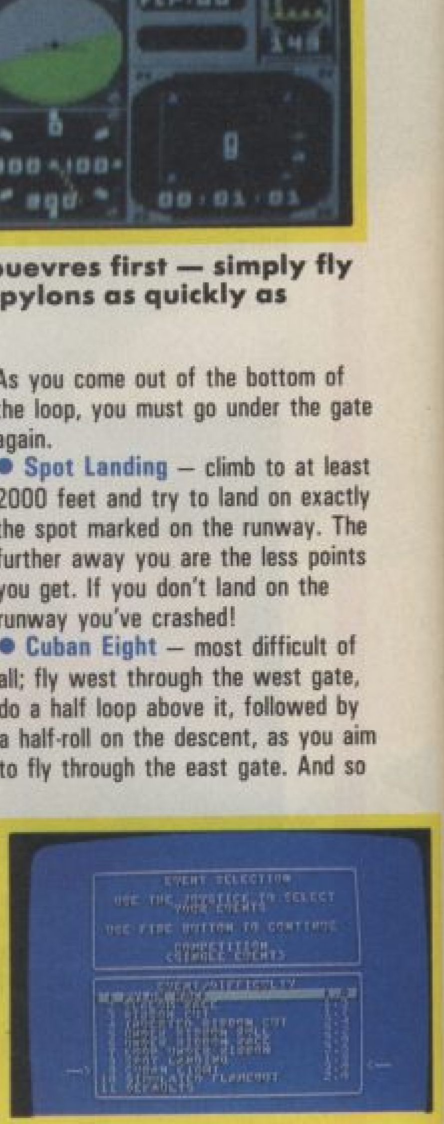


Concorde ace Captain John Hutchinson flew into the CU offices again this month to try out his aerobatic skills on Acrojet. Not just a flight sims expert, he's also become a parachutist. BBC viewers will have seen him make his first freefall jump on the recent Holiday Air '86 programme.

Before you start flinging your plane around, you'll find it helpful to practice some of the basic manoeuvres: climbing, diving, turning and especially landing (you guessed it, it's pretty tricky). To help you along, the very well-written operations manual has sections covering such matters, including lots of information on aerodynamics.

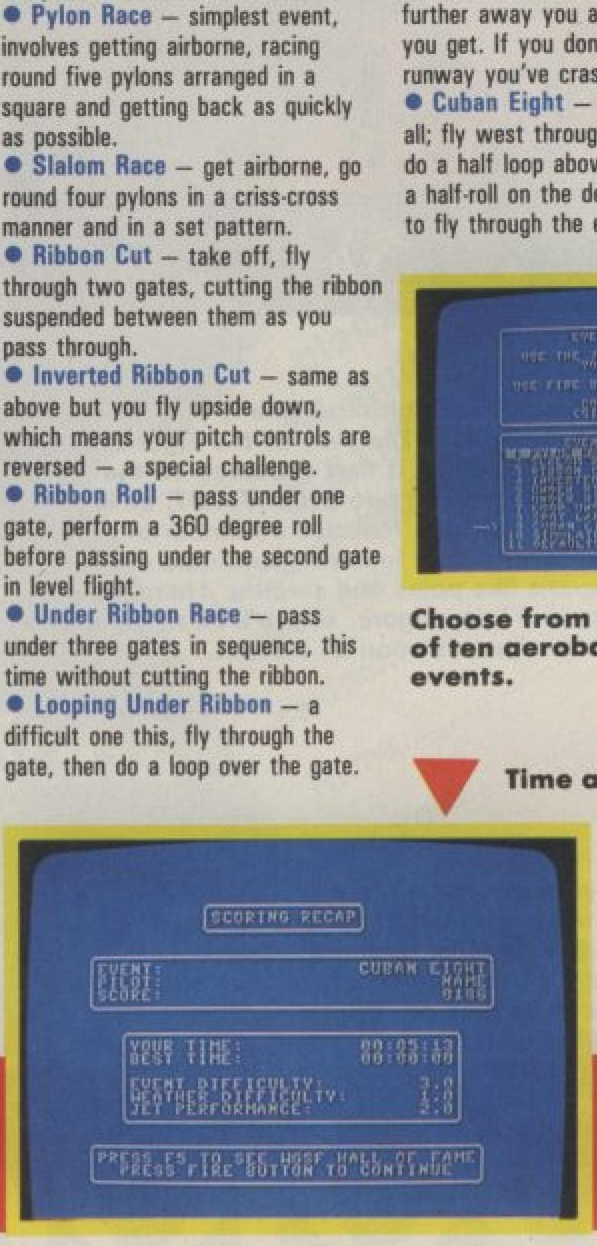
Now you've learned the basics, we can start on the ten aerobatic and competition events. These are:

- **Pylon Race** — simplest event, involves getting airborne, racing round five pylons arranged in a square and getting back as quickly as possible.
- **Slalom Race** — get airborne, go round four pylons in a criss-cross manner and in a set pattern.
- **Ribbon Cut** — take off, fly through two gates, cutting the ribbon suspended between them as you pass through.
- **Inverted Ribbon Cut** — same as above but you fly upside down, which means your pitch controls are reversed — a special challenge.
- **Ribbon Roll** — pass under one gate, perform a 360 degree roll before passing under the second gate in level flight.
- **Under Ribbon Race** — pass under three gates in sequence, this time without cutting the ribbon.
- **Looping Under Ribbon** — a difficult one this, fly through the gate, then do a loop over the gate. As you come out of the bottom of the loop, you must go under the gate again.
- **Spot Landing** — climb to at least 2000 feet and try to land on exactly the spot marked on the runway. The further away you are the less points you get. If you don't land on the runway you've crashed!
- **Cuban Eight** — most difficult of all; fly west through the west gate, do a half loop above it, followed by a half-roll on the descent, as you aim to fly through the east gate. And so



Choose from a set of ten aerobatic events.

Time and score are displayed after each event.





it goes on until you've described a figure of eight — makes your stomach turn.

● **Flame-out Landing** — similar to spot landing but you've got to land without using any power.

If these set pieces aren't sufficient challenge for you, you can select your own course from six of the events described above.

To score highly, you must complete events as quickly as possible (except landing events) but you do get consolation points for flying correctly and finishing in one piece. You can get bonus points for flying in more difficult weather conditions.

So how did it fly? *Acrojet* is very sensitive. You've got to keep constant control of the plane with your joystick, whilst keeping an eagle eye on the flight and engine instruments. Remember, most of these competitions are done very close to the ground which leaves very little margin for error. If you allow the engine to overheat, it could damage it, and you might have to attempt a forced landing.

Engine sound effects are good, and so is the accuracy of instrumentation except for the artificial horizon which sometimes displays the plane as banking, when you can see on the outside 3-D view and on the compass that the wings are level. This is irritating because you need this accuracy of information when you're looking sideways or backwards.

Having completed all my events, I found *AcroJet* completely absorbing and very exciting. Moreover, for such a complex game, it's extremely good value for money. It's given me a taste for the aerobatic displays I used to do in the RAF — any vacancies in the Red Arrows?

John Hutchinson



This time cut the ribbon as you fly through the gate.

Set degree of difficulty and your aircraft's performance.





Use your instruments to check speed, altitude and pitch.

Pass under the gates without cutting the ribbon on the top.



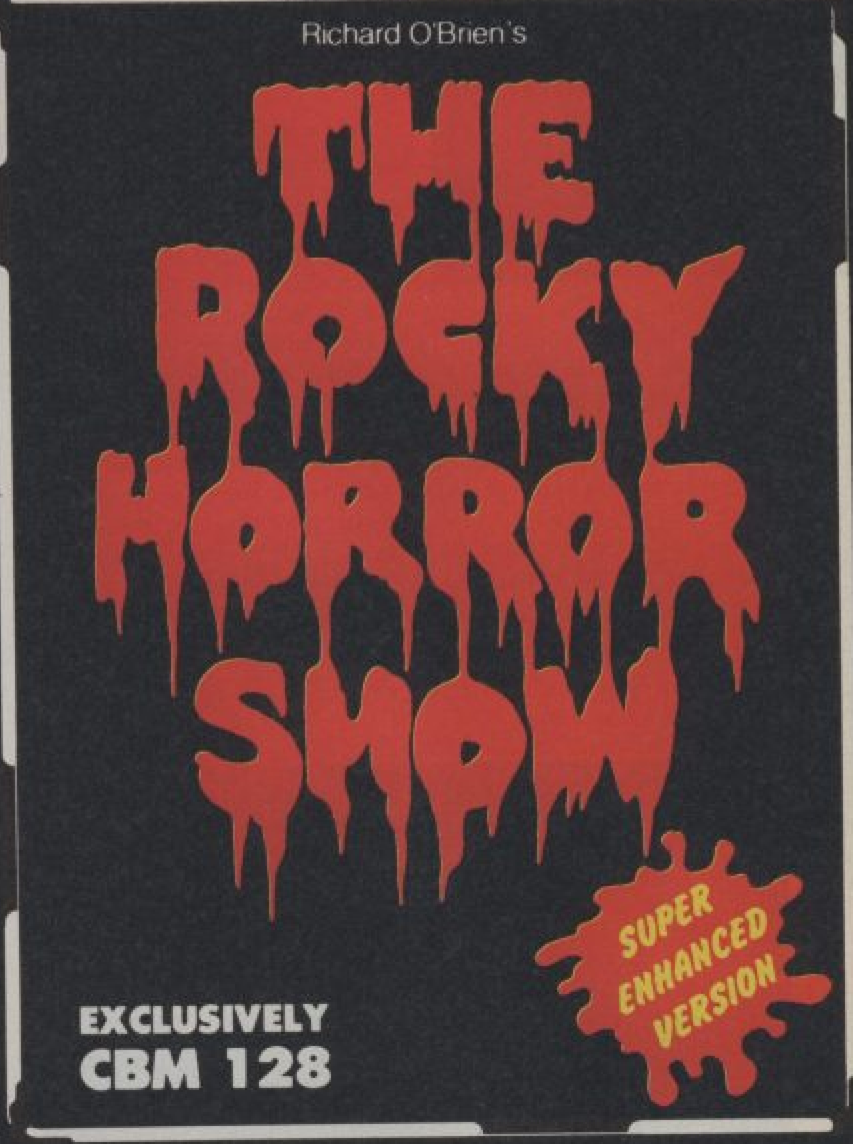


Landing is probably the most difficult part of Acrojet — fasten your seatbelt.

	Rating (1–10)
Graphics	8
Sound	6
Toughness	9
Endurance	8
Value	8

8 Overall







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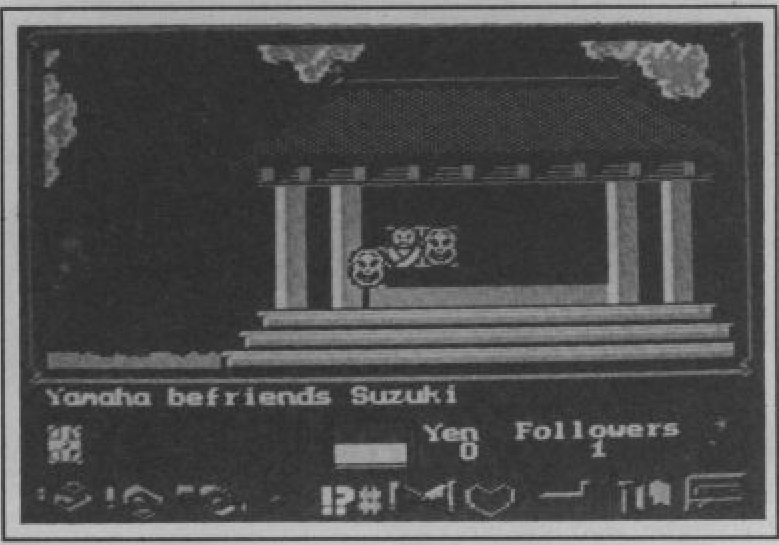
CRL

SHOGUN

COMMODORE 64/128 VIRGIN

Price: £9.95/cass

Will news that Yamaha has befriended Suzuki really affect your progress?



Many of the current crop of oriental games, base themselves on the fascination we all seem to have with being able to drop someone at fifteen paces with a twitch of an eyelash.

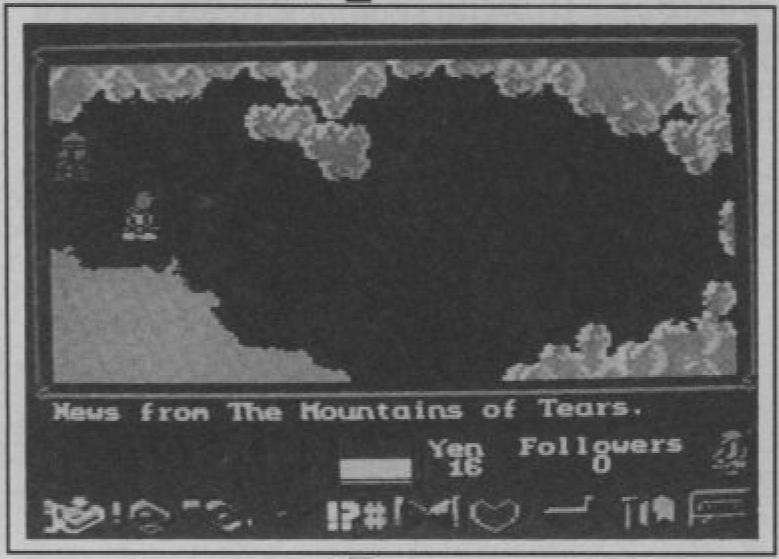
James Clavell's bestselling 'Shogun' novel released a few years back must bear the responsibility for much of the popular interest with Japanese culture. Shinto chic, you might call it. So it's funny that this adaptation should take its place very much at the back of the oriental games craze.

Shogun, though, is not a fighting game, it's a yuppie game. It's all about making it to the top of the Japanese social scale — becoming the Shogun. To do this you will have to bribe, befriend, kill and coerse the other characters in the game. All you need is to gather twenty followers to become Show dog, but in a place like Japan trust is not easily won.

Once the game is loaded you are given the choice of being any character in the game. Take my tip, be a samurai they're well 'ard and they're the key to the game. Then you're into it with only your wits for support to begin with.

The first thing that struck me was all the pretty screens and the cutely drawn characters. Then I realised I could walk around in mid air and occasionally even through solid objects, just like you would in a typical maze adventure, just in fact like you did in Virgin's finest moment, *Sorcery*. It's then you realise that they just can't shake that game off.

Like all the other characters, you can walk around in mid-air.



Shogun isn't a maze adventure but it does use some of those parameters, and this destroyed some of the game's credibility for me. Not too much though, because, as you should know by now I loved *Sorcery* (on the Amstrad ahem).

Another problem is one that I suspect you find in the book. You can't remember what and who half the characters are about. So when the screen scrolls up information about Lord Ishido surrendering to Samurai Suzuki you feel like running through the dramatis personae to find out what the hell difference this is likely to have on your career path to being Showdog. It's well worth making a few notes on who you run into, but I doubt if you'll find the information that gets flashed up is of much use, because it's too quick to digest as you're playing unless you pause the game frequently.

You pause the game and make all your other decisions and actions with an icon system. There are ten of them at the bottom of the screen which allow you to take, drop, give, examine, order, pause, befriend, attack, yield and save to tape. No complaints here, they're all self explanatory and easy to use. The most important of these are the order icon which allows you, once you have influenced a character (befriend them, bribe them, or fight them) to tell them what to do. Get them to protect you and do your dirty work.

Taking and dropping allows you to pick up many of the items you'll find along the route. Shields and priest wheels all have their uses as does fish, saki and cherries which replenish your strength. You'll also find money scattered around which is useful for bribing people.

Shogun really has to stand and fall on its character interplay and this is really where its fault lies. Although I found it amusing at times to do all this wheeling and dealing I was never quite sure if it was getting me anywhere. Your only visible sign of this is your follower count which tends to fluctuate.



Text above the set inform you of your location.

I befriended Lady Yotaka in one game, thinking it was wise move only to have the miserable old cow turn on me thirty seconds later and do me in!

In all the time I played I never exactly shone in the popularity stakes. Some would say this is grim realism I'm sure, but I was bribing, befriending and killing people left right and centre. Clearly you don't get to be a Shogun being a workhorse.

Strategy games of this type have something of an unpredictable appeal. But I liked the mood of the thing, though sometimes I felt that I was getting in to a stalemate.

Mike Pattenden

Rating	Score (1–10)
Graphics	7
Sound	5
Toughness	8
Endurance	7
Value	7

7 Overall

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◀ **You won't be proud to see your name on this screen.**

•RAGING BEAST•

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Price: £1.99/cass

Ole! Fancy being England's answer to El Cordoba? You do? Then now's your chance with Firebird's latest cheapo offering, *Raging Beast.* So grab your cloaks you micro matadors and here we go.

When the game has loaded you are presented with an impressive screen showing a matador bravely tackling a fierce bull. Underneath is proclaimed, "El major de la plaza", which, I am reliably informed, means The King of The Ring. And how pleased I was when my name was proudly slotted into one of these screens only to be told that this one meant The King of the Hospital.

The actual game is quite tricky to get the hang of, but being a cool dude, I was soon defeating those steak sandwiches by the dozen. And before anyone boycotts this game because of cruelty to animals don't bother, there just isn't any.

The object of the game is to dodge the bull with the aid of your trusty red cloak earning points and surviving until a ring is thrown from the crowd which you have to place around the bull's neck. This may sound easy but with five hundred pounds of beef chasing after you, believe me, it isn't.

To lure the bull nearer to you, you may wave the cloak. But this gets him real mad! If you wave it enough the bull will scrape his foot across the ground before hurtling towards you at high speed.

Dodging el torro is easy enough but if and when you are caught you may not get away for the bull seems to take great pleasure in tossing you about like a rag doll and then crushing you like a grape. When this happens, out come the stretchers — looks like your matador days are over. Oh well, there's always the next game!

Sometimes, (only sometimes mind you) the bull feels generous and lets you up, or even accidentally knocks you onto his back. And you can earn some extra points by staying on as long as possible.

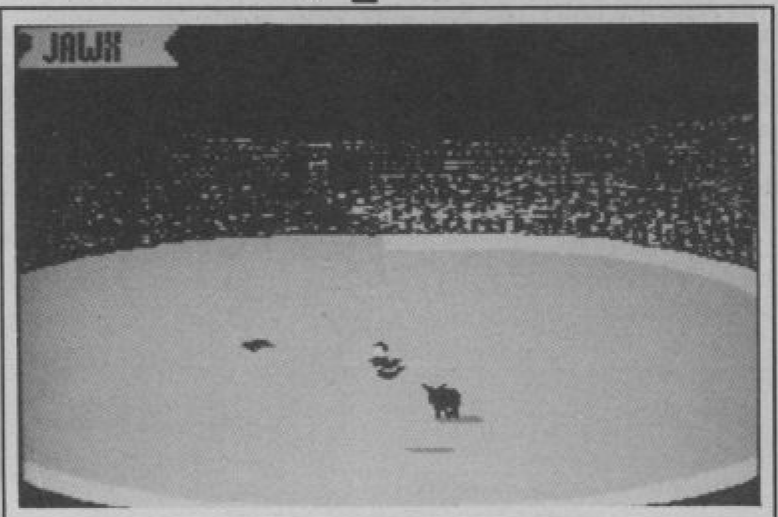
After taking a bit of a bashing on Raging Beast I desperately wanted to beat the first bull. Neither graphics nor sound are spectacular but Firebird must score full marks for originality and value.

Ferdy Hamilton

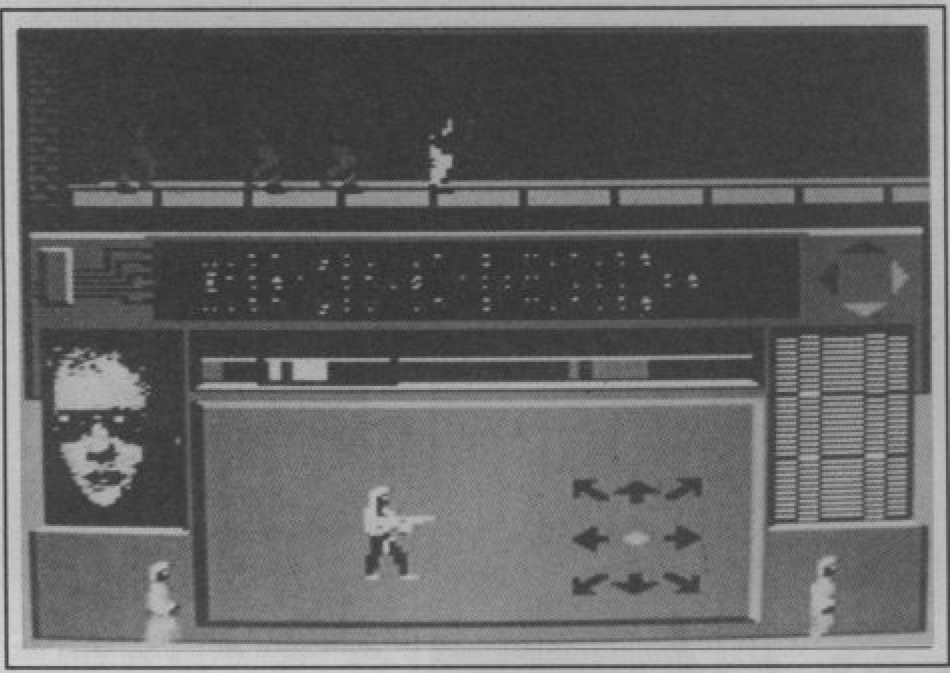


▲ **The bull looks on smugly as they carry you off on a stretcher.**

Try to stay on the bull for as long as you can without getting tossed like a pancake. ▼



	Rating (1–10)
Graphics	6
Sound	6
Toughness	8
Endurance	8
Value	9
Overall	**8**



When the going gets tough reach for your machine gun.

found them) include stun guns and stun grenades and can be brought to bear with the fire button while standing still.

To help you, a large part of the screen is used to display icons showing your current actions. A side elevation of the whole building can be called up at anytime and a flashing spot indicates your position. Getting around is still a problem though, certain lifts only go to certain floors and you might well be attacked whilst waiting for one.

The game concludes when you have freed your friend and escaped via the subterranean river by which you first entered the building, and your score depends on how many answers and photographs you get.

At first, I was impressed with the game and, as a technical

NEXUS

COMMODORE 64/128 NEXUS PRODUCTIONS

Price: £9.95/cass

It arrived in one of the most ridiculous packages I've ever seen, looking something like a squashed hand-grenade! Would I find explosive action inside? Read on . . . .

You play the role of a journalist working on the Clarion newspaper. Your editor tells you: "A friend of yours was investigating a drugs racket in Colombia. We've just heard he's been kidnapped by the drugs baron. I want you to go down there, get him out and get me a scoop story."

The game is set within the drug ring's Colombian HQ, a massive complex of rooms, lifts and passages. N.E.X.U.S. is an undercover group trying to break the drugs ring from the inside, and will supply you with vital skills, weapons and information. The top fifth of your screen shows the section of corridor or room you are currently in, and all the action takes place here. Beneath is a plethora of message panels, direction indicators, pictures and maps.

The game strategy is a classic 'search and solve' type, with a bit of kung fu style fighting. The 'search' part is very reminiscent of *Impossible Mission*: turn to face a fitting or a piece of furniture and you search it for clues. The briefing manual contains 32 questions, the answers to which are split into four parts and scattered about the building. When you have collected some information, you will need to find an editing terminal to read the answers, and a transmitting terminal to send the answers back to your editor.

Once you have found a camera, you can also photograph rooms and people and transmit these back for extra points. The personnel terminals can be used to examine the files on any of the Nexus agents, and you can match their photo to their particular skills such as forgery or armaments.

While in a corridor, you will meet up with guards who will try to stop you, unless you have a valid pass. Nexus agents are recognisable by their pictures which appear on the screen while the character is in sight.

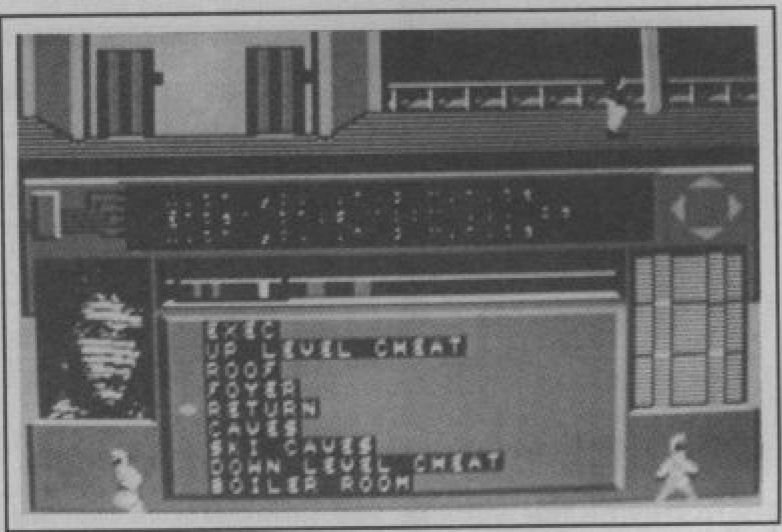
All your movements are controlled by the joystick, and the control system is rather complicated. You can walk, run, do forward and backward rolls, flying kicks and punches. Weapons (when you've



Digitised faces enable you to identify friends and enemies.

achievement, I still am. Having said that, the actual game-play is pathetically repetitive. Most of the corridors look the same and the rooms are all similar. The main tasks of searching quickly became a bit of a drag, as did the guard's relentless attempts to beat you unconscious and imprison you! Some of the messages that appear on the screen are so small, they're almost impossible to read on a tv set, and although the other characters can talk to you, your total vocabulary consists of 'Get lost!' This is supposed to be a greeting! No wonder the guards don't seem to like you . . . .

Fred Reid



Searching the Nexus Complex for information.

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5 Overall

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TAU CETI

COMMODORE 64/128
C.R.L.
Price: £9.95/cass

Screen Star

Here is a shoot 'em up all dressed up with fantastic graphics that are absolutely rivetting to play. What I mean is, I like it.

It goes like this. Colonists from earth arrived on Tau Ceti in 2050 a.d. and lived there happily for nearly a hundred years until a viscious plague called Encke's Syndrome ravaged the planet and forced the survivors to flee.

Back on earth scientists were busy beavering away on Encke's and managed to come up with a cure.

The surrounding colonies on Alpha Centauri and Beta Hydri were cleared of the disease but Tau Ceti posed a more difficult problem.

The fleeing colonists did not de-activate Tau-Ceti III's defence systems in their haste to get away from the planet. So these robot systems ran amok on Tau Ceti after the colonists fled and killed a landing party from Earth who had been sent in to retake the planet.

A full scale invasion was considered too costly to mount and the defence systems on Tau Ceti were, in any case, capable of resisting this if they needed to.

The only way Tau Ceti could be re-colonised was to send in a single armed Ground Skimmer to shut down the Fusion Reactor in the planet's capital city, Centralis.

Cue you, your 64, and your copy of *Tau Ceti*.

Right from the opening screen you know you're playing a game that somebody somewhere put a lot of effort into. The attention to detail is impressive, especially on the metallic looking view from the cockpit.

Type 'Launch' and the sliding doors open to release the Skimmer into Tau Ceti's inhospitable, desert terrain. First thing you notice are the buildings are all valuable assets and your employers, Gal-Corp, will have to fund the construction of new dwellings out of next year's budget once the planet has been stabilised.

Equally impressive in the graphics department are the Skimmer's many controls. Your **Equip** function allows you access to a building repair, refuelling and rearming facility — pretty useful this as those droids will give your Skimmer a battering.

The extent of damage to your ship is given to you when you request a status report. The information on your location and your ship appears



Targetting a Control Tower.



The Skimmer blasts its Anti Missile Missiles with just 0.4.36 minutes to Sunset.

Screen Star



Preparing to enter a Civilian Supply Centre — might be something useful in here.

in the window at just below your main cockpit view. An on-screen **Pad** allows you to make notes of anything of interest that you think may help you. **New Pad** selects a fresh page in the note pad.

Most impressive of all these controls is the map of the planet showing information about all the cities on Tau Ceti.

The Skimmer is highly armed with a single mounted laser operated by the joystick. A simple blast-as-you-pass type gun.

But there's other more sophisticated weaponry as well; like the Anti Missile Missiles (AMM's), Starlight Flares, Infra-red night sights, Scanners, Planetary compasses, and a Command Computer.

You have so much at your disposal that it tends to give a false sense of security, a feeling that there is nothing you couldn't cope with. Which is definitely not the case because even though you have several computerised controls you will still need to think and react quickly if you are going to succeed.

Understanding how to use all your equipment is essential in *Tau Ceti*. Everything works and serves an important purpose.

The Skimmer can operate at ground level as well as flying, under joystick control, across the planet. When in ground mode you are in direct contact with the Skimmer's computer via a terminal.

As you travel the planet you will notice some impressive graphics. A far off star disappears slowly beyond the horizon as Tau Ceti spins through one of her hour-long cycles.

A shooting star or possibly an interplanetary vessel drifts by slowly.

Playing The Game

The objective is to get inside the Main Central Reactor on Centralis. You will need to assemble a cooling system with rods you have found by searching the various buildings of the Tau Cetan cities.

Actually getting inside the buildings takes a bit of doing as well.

You have to watch for their characteristic flickering air lock and then fly in slowly.

Once inside, you're automatically returned to ground mode and you can begin to explore the building. Typing *Look* will show you a view of the interior and any useful items that are to be found there.

It is important to be able to identify the various buildings. Some of these are Jump Pad terminals — Tau Ceti's futuristic underground system.

You can use this for hyper spacing to other cities. It's a little dangerous, though, as native 'Sand Hoppers' tend to congregate around the exits to Jump Terminals causing collisions.

Some of the other distinctive looking buildings are Civilian Supply Centres, Military Supply Centres, Fortresses, Control Towers, Substation Reactors, and your main target, the Main Central Reactor itself.

The robots are massive building-like structures themselves — deadly Hunters Mark I, II, and III's.

I actually enjoyed the combat with the Hunters. Although you are advised by Gal-Corp not to damage the buildings nobody said anything about the droids. If you like a good shoot 'em up you can be as happy as Larry, skimming the planet and blasting them, like a Blade Runner (Sorry to bring that up CRL).

I enjoyed the story line of *Tau Ceti*. It was refreshingly original but the same cannot be said of the game design. It borrows heavily on lots of games that have gone before. It's got a bit of *Elite*, a bit of *Quake Minus One*, (well rather a lot of *Quake Minus One*, really) and all the controls and scanners that have been used in dozens of games.

That said, it's a lot more playable than any of those games for my money, and, unlike *Elite* and *Quake*, you don't need to set aside a fortnight for an average game.

CRL have totally redeemed themselves with *Tau Ceti*. After the chronic *Blade Runner* and awful *Space Doubt* it is difficult to understand how the same company can have such wide extremes of quality in their game catalogue.

Now back to blasting Hunters.

Eugene Lacey

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	8 Overall
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	



The scanner shows several buildings ahead and you can see them too from the Skimmer's cockpit.

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS

COMMODORE 64/128
ELITE
Price: £9.95/cass £14.95/disk

How many games and adventures can you think of where a fair maiden is kidnapped and imprisoned by a nasty character only to be rescued by a young prince? The answer is a hell of a lot. The plot is standard folklore and goes back to legends like Orpheus and Beauty and the Beast down the ages to Superman and King Kong. Some of the stories are naff and some are classics. The same goes for computer games.

Ghosts and Goblins falls into the classic variety of such implementations. It's a faithful representation of Capcom's coin op of the same name and Elite's second major arcade conversion of the year.

Whereas *Bombjack* was flawed in several places Chris Butler, whose previous work on *Commando* was fine but nothing special, had done a great job packing all the elements of the original into the 64.

The gameplay is straightforward. Scroll right across the screen fighting off the nasties until you reach the dragon's lair wherein your girl is incarcerated. Nothing new, nothing original but furious joystick clenching, firebutton-stabbing action.

You begin in a haunted graveyard where zombies rise up out of the ground like a scene from Spielberg's 'Poltergeist'. From here on it's only you and your wits separating you from an early death. You have two lives. The first touch from a nasty makes you jump out of your armour the second touch reduces you to a pile of bones.

If you fail, as you undoubtedly will many times, the game won't send you right back to the beginning. You'll start from a predetermined point along the way if you stab the joystick quickly.

Chris has done well to squeeze all the elements in the arcade game into his conversion, but don't expect the whole game to be there. There's a good seven or eight levels in the original but only four could be crammed into the conversion.

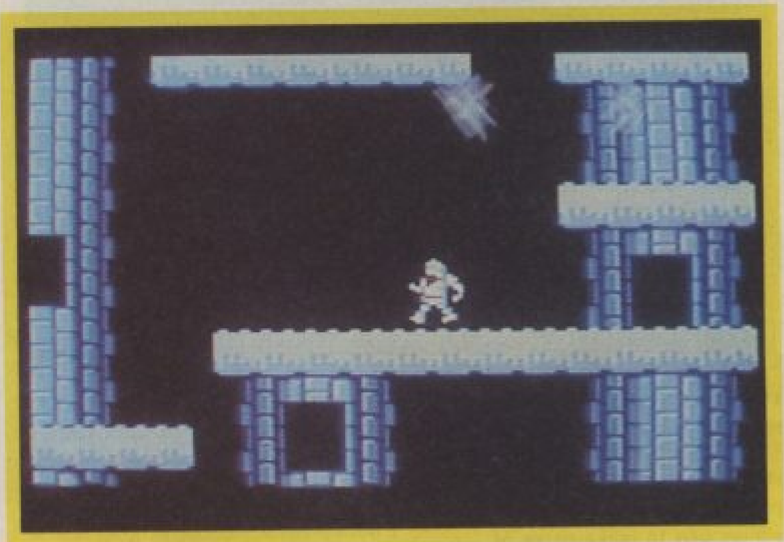
From the graveyard you proceed onto level two, the Ice Palace. This is the best bit as you negotiate goblins and moving platforms and then proceed on to a house filled with nasty little gremlins which leap out the window at you. The final section is a house patrolled by great white trolls.

At the end of each level you'll have to kill off Ikaaku, the gatekeeper in order to collect a key to move onto the next level. To come there's a selection of bats, fireball spitting icicles, demons and a particularly niggly bridge where flames leap up and consume your knight unless you're very sharp.

The final challenge is the dragon that kidnapped your girly in the first place and it's autofire on (well it is for me) to break down the ten segments of the dragon's body.

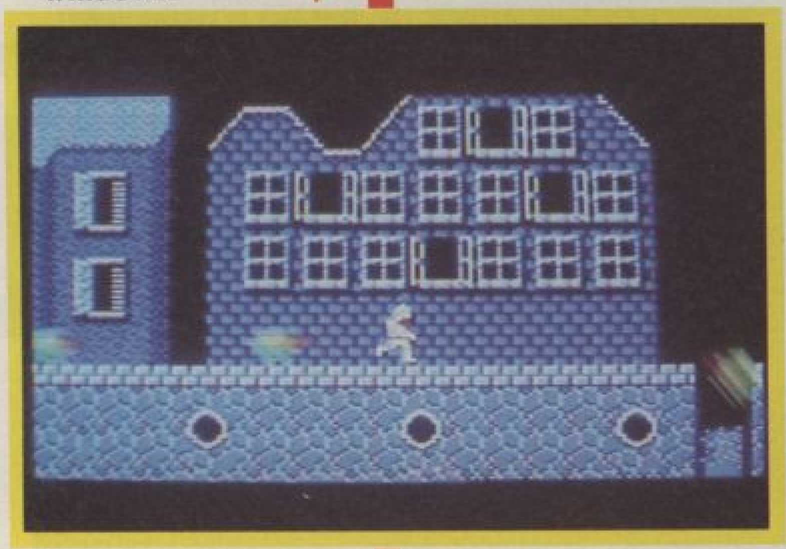
There's nothing special here, just a very good implementation of an excellent arcade game. My only real gripe is that I'd like to have seen a slightly larger character. The knight is only one sprite high, whereas the arcade character is huge. That's the limitations of the 64 as much as anything else. Though I suspect some day we will see ways of getting round this. There are people who have already found ways to use the whole of the screen and border, so I reckon it's only a matter of time. Meanwhile as long as the action's as good as this I'm not going to complain too loudly.

Mike Pattenden

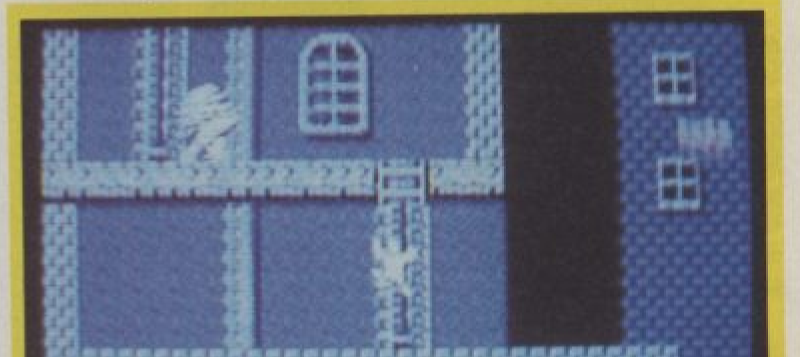


The Ice Palace. A set of platforms to work your way around — guarded by goblins and man-eating plants.

Having made your way past the Ice Palace it's on to the mansion houses. The blurs are gremlins which swiftly attempt to hunt you down, diving out of the windows.



The mansion house guarded by the large white giants. Make your way around the ladders killing each one. Several hits are needed to stop each one. Watch out too for the birds.



Screen Star

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8 Overall

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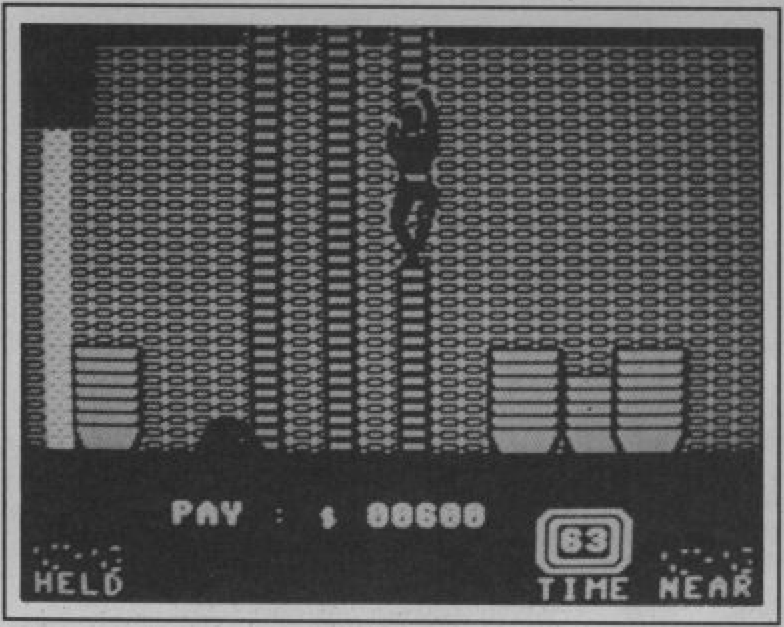
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SABOTEUR



You've clubbed the guard senseless and you're now making your way up the warehouse.

COMMODORE 64/128 DURELL

Price: £9.95/cass

The hooded figure of Saboteur makes his entrance a little late in the day for a spy-style arcade adventure. The games-buying public are on the alert for poor imitation, prepared to catch out the fast buck makers.

They may not be quite quick enough to track down *Saboteur*. He's pretty slick for a Spectrum conversion. Large, well animated, plenty of flash moves and an atmospheric building to explore.

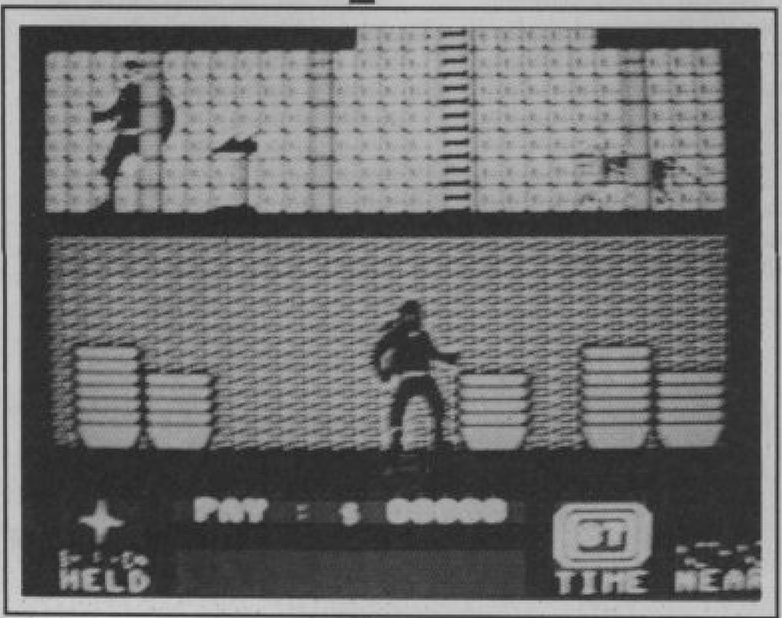
The task before him is pure hit and run. Infiltrate a high security building and steal a disk with details of rebel leaders contained on it before they are released to security stations. Then make your escape via helicopter.

The odds are stacked against you in the shape of guards and nasty alsatians who snap at your heals draining your energy constantly.

Neither these or the guards ever kill you outright. They'll chase you relentlessly around draining your energy. It's fairly easy to escape simply by dodging onto the next screen. If your energy is particularly low pausing will rebuild it to an acceptable level. Don't do this unless it's really necessary because there's a time limit.

In fact the biggest single enemy is time, ticking away rapidly. You only have minutes to get the disk before the details get released and the rebel cause ends well and truly up against the wall.

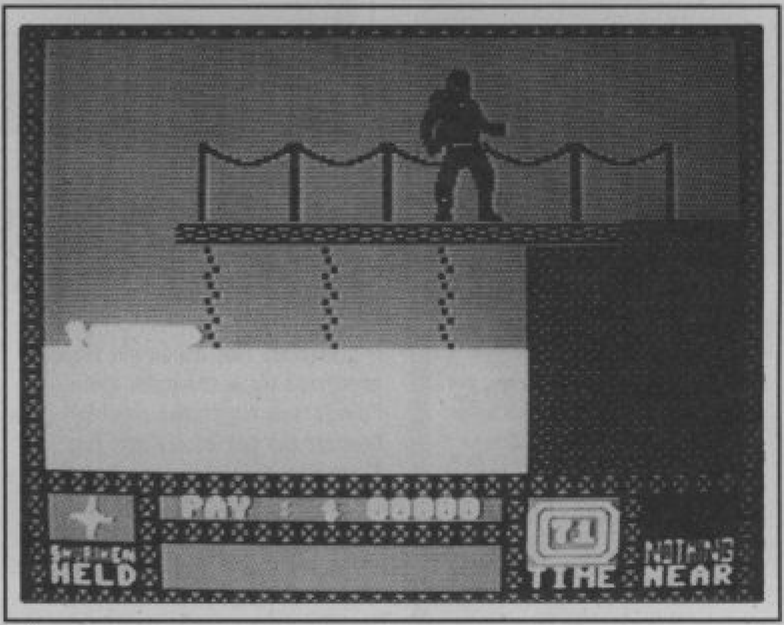
As you move around the converted warehouse you'll find various items that can be used to your advantage. The guards for example have been very careless about leaving knives and shurikens lying around. One other item it's essential you find is the bomb which is down in the sewers. Once you're carrying this though you can't pick up any of the weapons. Also useful are the computer terminals dotted around the place which give you access through doors when activated.



It's a dead end go back and take a different route. Just in case you're wondering what the purpose of all those urns is, there isn't one.

The controls are easy to master and in fact the whole game is very comfortable to get along with. There's no fiddling around with obscure icons or attempts at needless complication. It's nice to be able to sit down and play a game after a cursory glance at the instructions. It also has a good degree of the atmosphere necessary to this kind of game. In fact this has everything the likes of *Max Headroom* lacked.

My only real gripe is I'm not sure that there's quite enough to it. By that I mean it's not very hard. Bar running out of time there's no reason why your saboteur should come to a sticky end amongst the dogs and guards. Hence I can see that once you've solved the game you may well struggle to find any further challenge to bring you back to it.



The start screen. Unlike the Amstrad version you don't cross the river in the boat. Boo hiss for laziness, Durell.

Saboteur is not exactly a mammoth game. You only have to go up and across a few screens to reach the helicopter for example. The time limit is ninety-nine seconds and there's no reason why you shouldn't be able to do it in less. It's tight but definitely completable — especially if you take the easy option and go straight for the helicopter.

Some random element would have been a good idea to incorporate, I feel. As it stands it's more *Possible Mission* than anything else.

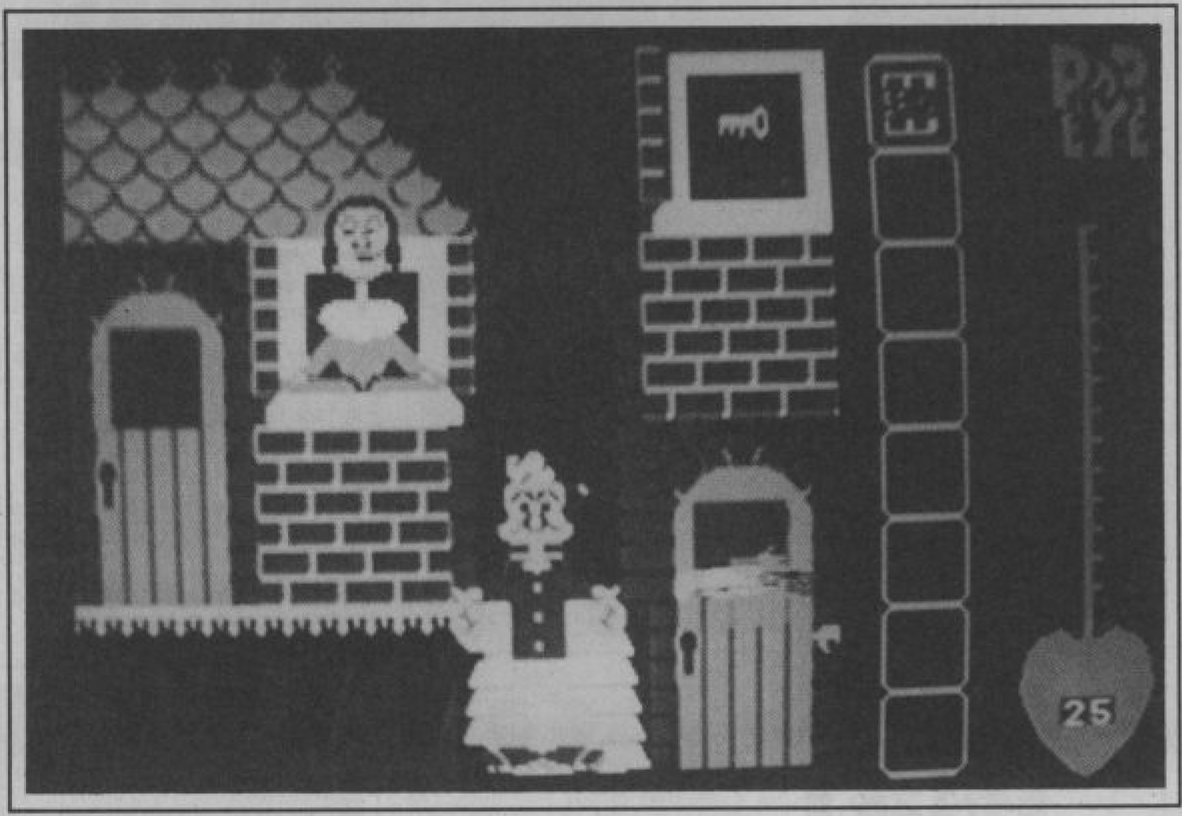
All said and done though, fair unpretentious entertainment. Nexus take note.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sound	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Toughness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Endurance	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

7 Overall





Olive waits for a big wet smacker but Popeye hasn't collected any hearts yet. ▶

COMMODORE 64/128 MACMILLAN SOFTWARE

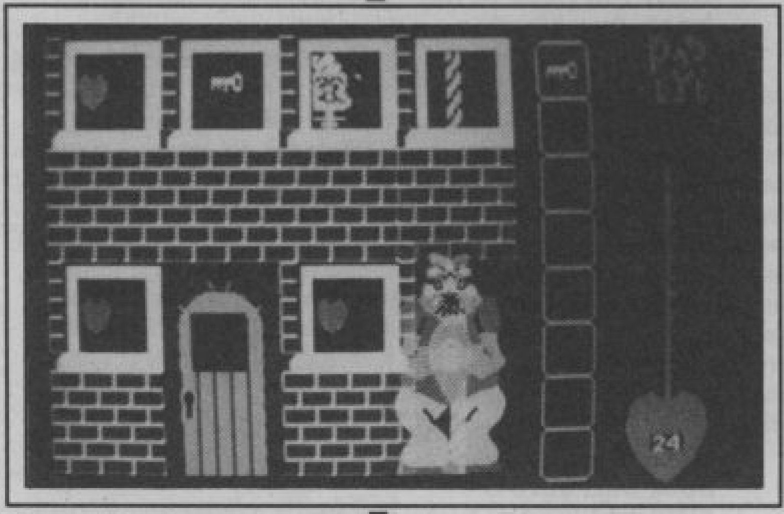
Price: £8.95/cass

• POPEYE •



If somebody had asked me for a good idea for a computer game, Popeye and his chums wouldn't have been at the top of my list. But Macmillan have this idea that Popeye is the most recognised cartoon around.

The Macmillan game represents the second attempt to produce a game based on the muscle-bound sailor. Parker Toys produced a plug-in cartridge two years ago based on the Popeye coin-op.



Thuggish Bluto patrols the street whilst Popeye cowers behind an upstairs window. ▲

This one was really disappointing. In it Popeye had to catch the hearts that were floating down amongst the platform structure where the game took place. It failed because it seemed to involve Popeye in too much running away from Bluto.

Anyway, we all know that Popeye loves Olive Oyl, although why is anyone's guess. To prove his love for her he must collect 25 hearts which are randomly distributed around his home town. When he's dug them all out, he must deliver them to luscious Olive to get a big mushy smacker.

This is not so easy — love never is (*such wisdom — Ed*), since there are lots of meanies around town. The obvious one, Bluto, roams the High Street and for a thug he boasts a fair degree of intelligence. The others, which include a shark, a dragon and a flying witch, are much more predictable.

Some hearts are placed behind closed doors, for which a key must be found, whilst others are placed in the path of the meanies.

But wait, there's something missing. You guessed it: also placed around town are cans of spinach which give Popeye extra lives — no spinach and no more kisses for Popeye.

The best feature of this game is the graphics, they could have stepped right out of the cartoon. Although the animation is a little blocky, the characters are large and move in a very realistic 'Popeye' way. Also, the scrupulous attention to detail impressed me — Popeye's wink is as good as ever. Ug, ug, ug.



As well as moving from screen to screen, the characters can move in front and behind each other. They can also move in and out of the scenery. This gives the game a nice feeling of depth.

But the game falls down on playability. Due to the size of the characters, Popeye is slow to react to the joystick, thus making the game very tough. But with a little perseverance, it all becomes very enjoyable. Nevertheless, another cartoon-based game fails to come up with anything beyond the standard 'pick up' aardvark. A shame. Popeye fans should enjoy this game, but the rest of you better have a gander at it first in your local computer store.

Colm Clarke

Graphics	9 (of 1–10)	
Sound	5 (of 1–10)	
Toughness	9 (of 1–10)	
Endurance	7 (of 1–10)	
Value	7 (of 1–10)	**6 Overall**

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'Going

Next month Richard Branson sets out with his Challenger II boat in a second attempt to win the coveted Blue Riband for the fastest crossing in a passenger vessel. To coincide with the record breaking bid, Virgin are releasing a game. It's based on the boat's voyage and Richard Branson's whole business empire. Eugene Lacey put on his deck pumps and had a sneak look at the game.

Richard Branson will need to leave home with a lot more than his American Express card when he sets off from the Ambrose Light, New York, in the £1.5 million Virgin Atlantic Challenger II in his second atempt to win the coveted Blue Riband for England.

The cost of the boat is only a drop in the Ocean, so to speak, of the total cost of the attempt. As Virgin's Fiona McNeil put it: "We just keep on spending the money."

The Virgin Mega-Store in Oxford Street, London, will be in permanent contact with Challenger as she crushes through the Atlantic where a specially constructed press suite will be dishing out free booze and up-dates on Challenger's progress to passing members of the press.

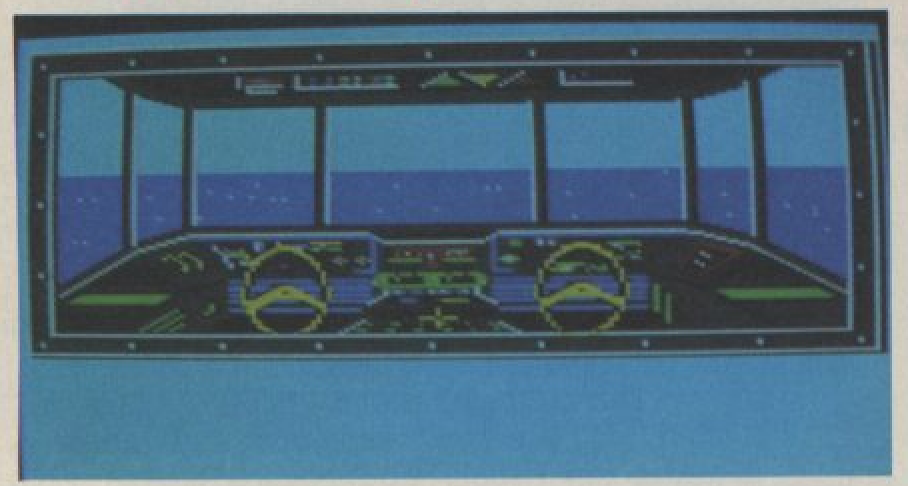
Everything has been calculated to generate maximum publicity for the Virgin Group in the hope that this display of the best of Britishness will encourage you to buy more Phil Collins records, plane tickets to New York, pop videos, books, copies of *Now Games*, *Shogun*, *Dan Dare* and a sea of other Virgin products.

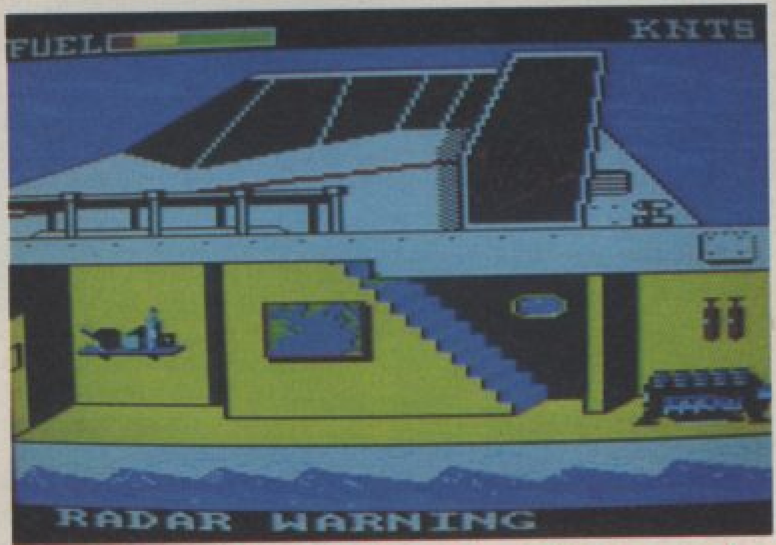
July 4th has been chosen for the start which also happens to be American Independence Day and the day that President Reagan, by pure coincidence, will also be in New York harbour re-opening the Statue of Liberty after its year-long closure for renovation.

Challenger will need to average 45 knots — that's 40mph to the likes of you and I — if she is to crack the current Blue Riband record of 3 days and ten hours.

The Blue Riband is the accolade being chased by Branson and his six-man crew. It is the award for the fastest sea crossing of the Atlantic in a passenger ship — first won by the paddle steamer Great Western in 1838.

View from the cockpit. Watch out for icebergs.





Section view — showing the main playing area of the game.

Challenger 1 came within a whisker of clinching the Blue Riband last Summer and she would have done had she not hit floating debris just 138 nautical miles from the 'winning post' at the Bishops Rock Light House just off the Scilly Isles.

Screen layout

The main play area is a cross section of the boat showing the cockpit at the top of the screen with the Wheelhouse below with the rest of the instruments.

Equipment is used by standing in front of it and pressing the fire button on the joystick. This will cause a window to open showing the controls of that particular piece of equipment in close-up.

As the instruments and equipment are on different levels the game involves a great deal of dashing around the boat.

The top of the screen will also show the time taken, fuel used, speed, and stress to the vessel.

Through the cockpit window you can see oncoming hazards such as icebergs, fishing vessels, and the refuelling ships with which you have to dock.

Docking is a risky manoeuvre that can easily cost you the Riband if you do not line up the Challenger with the fuel ship correctly and approach at just the right speed.

One thing the game designers have not been allowed to put into the game is the sinking of the Challenger and the



for it!'

loss of the crew. If you mess things up the game ends with a rescue.

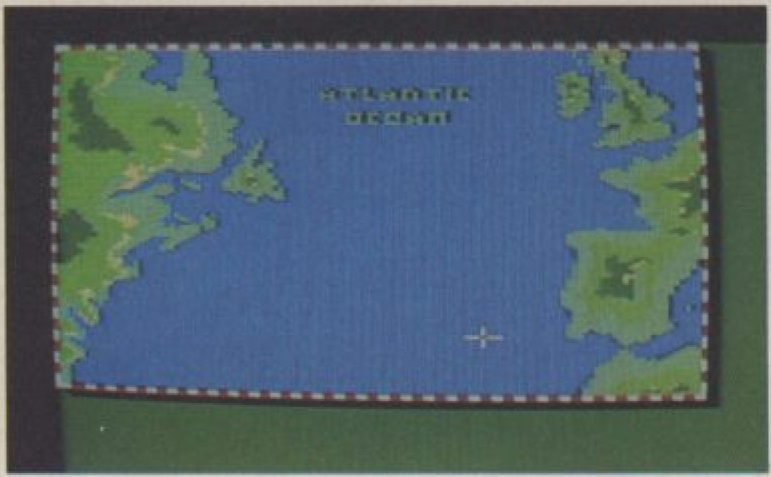
Playing the Game

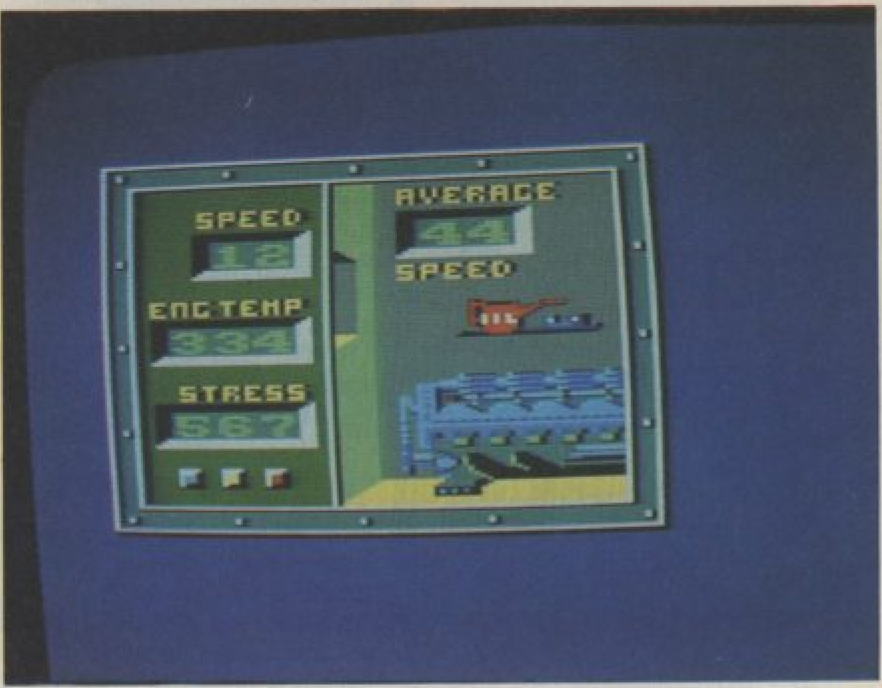
The game is divided up into the four separate legs of the crossing — following closely the planned event and the log of last year's attempt.

The first stretch takes you to 550 a whopping 1,000 mile stint.

You will need to check your navigation hourly on this stretch of the 'Great Circle' — as you head for your third rendezvous in the middle of the Atlantic ocean.

The view from the cockpit is more difficult than before and there are huge 'rogue' waves to contend with as an additional hazard.





Look after the engine and don't go too fast or it will over-heat.

Map will show your current position and refueling stops.

miles off the coast of Halifax, Nova Scotia. It's a busy fishing region so you will need to use the radar constantly to avoid colliding with trawlers.

You begin with a near full tank of fuel even though you will only need approximately half to get you to your first rendezvous.

The extra fuel on the first leg will enable you to go astray at the beginning of the game. There is less leniency the further you get.

The second leg is much tougher. You will need the radar as you are travelling mainly at night. A full tank of fuel is required to take you to your next rendezvous at the Flemish Pass —

The last leg should occur approximately sixty hours after leaving New York (if all goes according to plan). The main things to concentrate on will be the speedometer to make up for any lost time required to break the record.

At no stage at sea is it wise to attempt to push Challenger too fast. This increases the stress on the boat, especially in adverse weather conditions, and may cause her to break up.

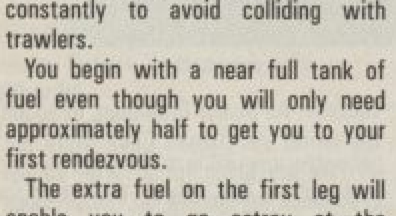
Scoring is based on the miles covered in the time taken. Deductions are made for damage to the ship, running out of fuel, not eating, or neglecting Virgin business affairs.

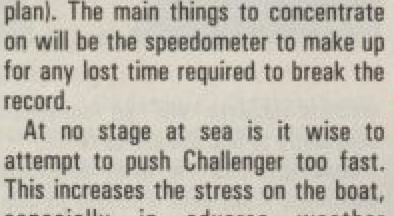
Realistic graphics

The programmers were given a brief to make the animation of Branson as life-like as the 64 could manage. To do this they have made his head fairly large (*it can't get much larger — Ed*) to accommodate his broad smile and fair hair.

One other Virgin Games character may make a starring appearance in the game if the programmers can find enough memory — the Laughing Shark who starred in all of Virgin's early game advertisements. Next month Screen Scene will have a full review of the Challenger game.

Title screen shows Challenger roaring out of New York.







continued over

Second time around

Lessons learned from the first attempt have aided the design of Challenger II. The most dramatic innovation is a switch from the twin-hulled Catamaran design to a single, aluminium-hulled vessel.

This will give Challenger II greater strength in the water and allow more room to tend the engines and instruments.

The crew also discovered that the 'Cat' really only performed well at very high speeds — in excess of 70mph

Challenger will take the 'Great Circle Route' — the quickest way across and the one thought to involve the least dangers.

From the Ambrose Lighthouse she will head north to the first refuelling point off Halifax, Nova Scotia. More fuel will be taken on board 200 miles East of Newfoundland before her final stop — a rendezvous with an Esso fuel ship in Mid Atlantic.

At that point it's throttle up and seatbelts on for the home stretch — the dash to Scilly.

The dangers

Early July was chosen for the attempt because at that time the Atlantic is thought to be at its calmest.

But there are still many perils to worry the crew. Although the threat of icebergs is thought to be lessened at this time of year there is likely to be fog coming off the Grand Banks near Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Fog will make it difficult to see any floating debris or stray icebergs.

The critical stretch is the most northerly 300 miles of the arc. As well as icebergs visible above the surface of the water there may also be deadly "growlers" that float just beneath the surface.

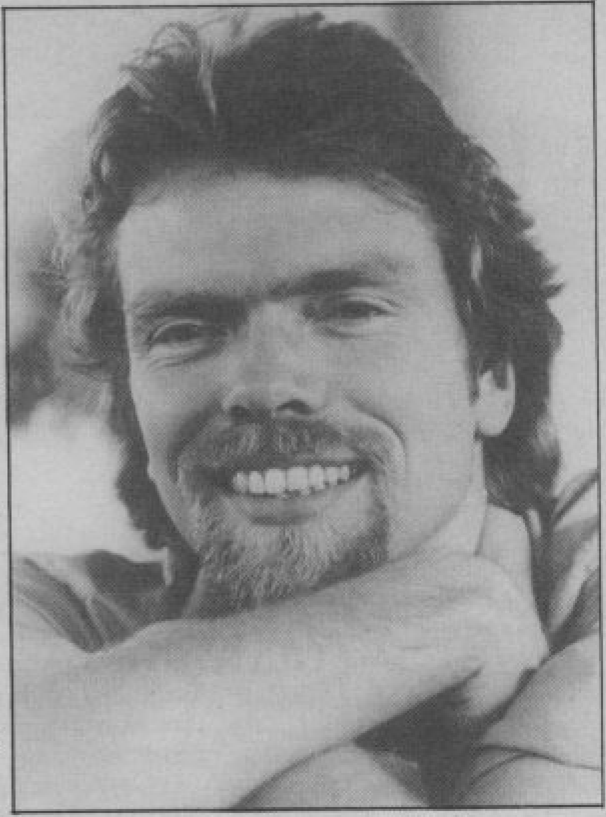
During this part of the trip the weather experts will be consulted constantly to find the safest route.

Challenger has the most advanced monitoring equipment on board to help her avoid the hazards as well as back-up from Royal Air Force Nimrods on the northern stretch of the arc.

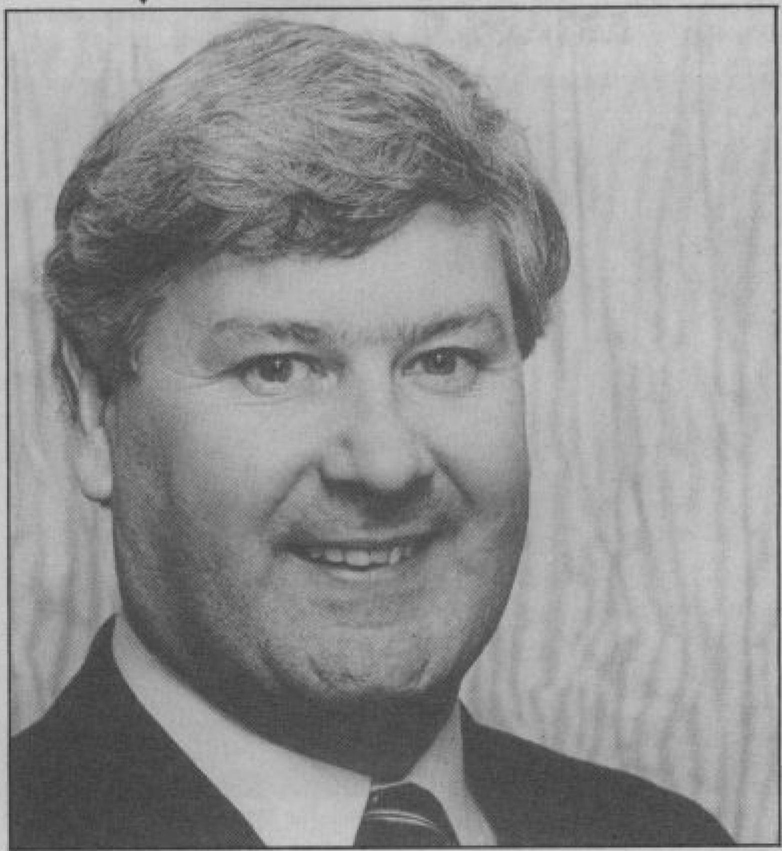
Apart from the risks to the vessel from icebergs, fog, and freak storms, Challenger will have to stand up to the pounding from huge Atlantic waves. The force will be so violent that the crew will have to remain strapped into their specially-designed seats for much of the 2,949 mile trip. There are no cosy bunks aboard the Challenger. She has been built for speed with one aim in mind — winning the Blue Riband.

Despite all the many dangers Cap'n Branson and his crew are confident of success. As Senior Crewman, ex round the world yachtsman Chay Blyth put it: "We are going for it. With all the experience we gained on the previous attempt the odds should be on our side".

Branson — hoping for a publicity boost for his businesses through winning the Blue Riband.



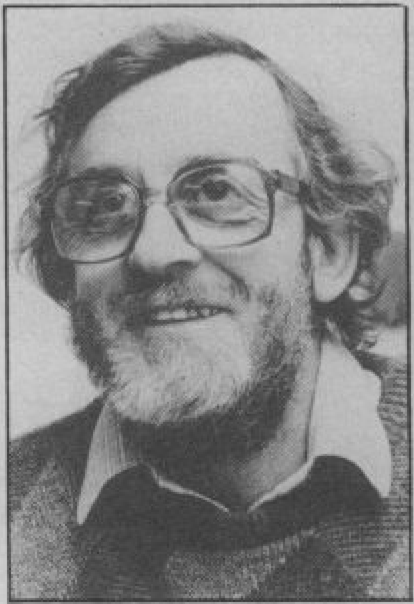
Chay Blyth: "We are going for it".



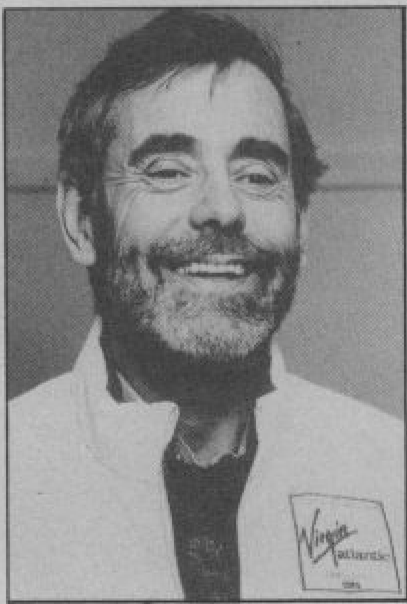
Steve Ridgway — the organiser.



Peter Downie — had to pull out at the last moment due to a broken leg.



Dag Pike — the navigator.



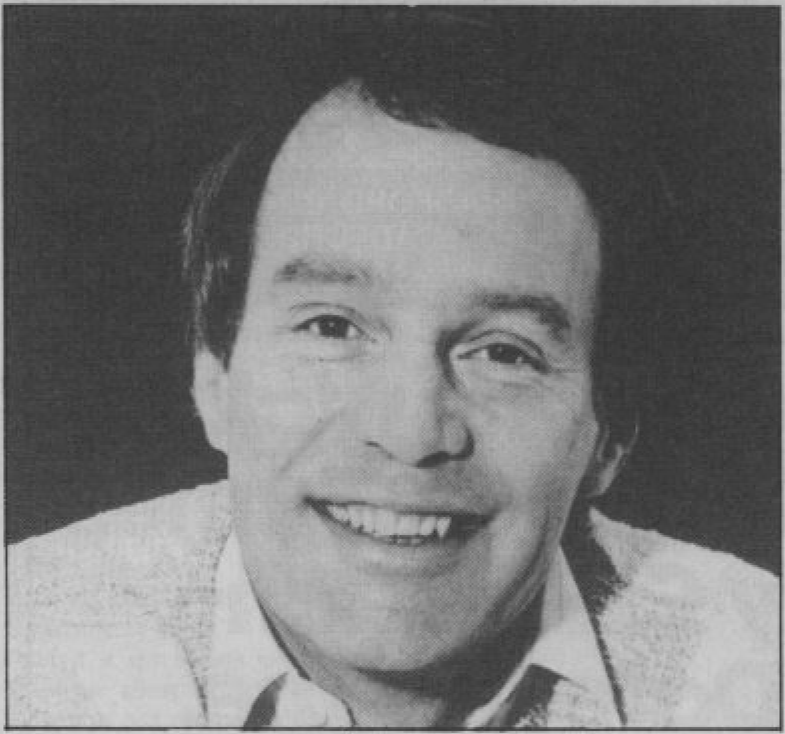
Meet the Crew

Challenger's eight-man crew are the typical mixed bag of individuals that these kind of one-off adventures bring together for once in their lifetimes.

From the world of big business is **Richard Branson** — Challenger's skipper and the most famous person on board.

His £300 million Virgin Group is now one of the largest leisure companies in





Peter McCann — the man from Tomorrow's World.

Europe. Not bad for a 35 year old who left school at fifteen and started his business in an old church hall selling records by mail order.

Second in command is **Chay Blyth** survivor of umpteen nautical achievements at sea. He was one of the first people to row the Atlantic, the first person to sail alone non-stop around the world in a westerly direction, voted yachtsman of the year in 1971, and winner of the Round Britain Race in 1978.

Blyth is clearly delighted to be in the Challenger team saying: "With all the experience gained last year we think we can successfully gain the Blue Riband in 1986".

Oddly named **Dag Pike** is Challenger's navigator. A bearded journalist from Stroud in Gloucestershire, Dag is also an expert on the latest electronic navigational equipment. He has had plenty of powerboat experience navigating the 'Dry Martini' powerboat to two World Championships.

Peter Downie is the boat's troubleshooter and chief engineer. He was respnsible for fitting out Challenger I and training all the crew last year but didn't make the attempt. This time he intends to be aboard to sort out any problems with the boat as the occur.

Sonni Levi needs no introduction to devotees of power boat racing. He is simply the world's greatest designer of the vessel. A string of race winning boats bear the Levi name.

Levi's co-designer for Challenger II was 33 year old **Peter Birkett** from Brighton. The Challenger organisers describe Peter as a "High seas drifter" because of the dozens of jobs he's had in boatyards and on ships. There's not much drifting about his life now, though, as he has become one of the elite band of boat designers whose services are sought by rich customers the world over.

Steve Ridgeway is the organiser and master planner of the whole Challenger project. He is the least experienced member of the crew but intends to make up for this by his determination. 'I really want that record', he told CU.

The final member of the team but by no means the least important is Tomorrow's World presenter — **Peter Macann**. Peter will be recording the highlights of the crossing for the BBC — for a special programme to be screened later in the year.

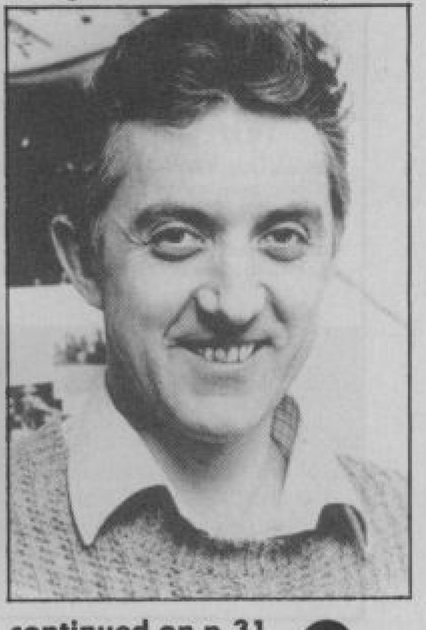
THE CHALLENGER II

Overall Length 72 feet. 22.02 Metres.
Width 19 feet. 5.82 Metres.
Hull All aluminium, welded and glued to save weight.
Engines Two MTUV12 396 TB turbocharged diesels each producing 200 HP at 2100 rpm. Engines mounted parallel aft of the cabin area.
Fuel tanks Made to Ministry of Defence specifications with a revolutionary protective honeycomb cocoon. Capable of holding 6.26 tonnes of fuel.
Range Challenger is capable of 860 miles at 2100 rpm — 45 knots.
Safety Equipment Buoyancy bags inflate in the event of an emergency and are designed to stop Challenger sinking entirely. Challenger also has inflatable rafts in the event of the flotation air bags not working.

Sonny Levi — Challenger's chief designer.



Peter Birkett — Co-designer.



continued on p.31.



LOOK OUT FOR MY SPARKLE RATING

continued from p.27.

The Software

Like most things connected with Richard Branson money comes into it somewhere along the line and Challenger's bid for the elusive Blue Riband is no exception.

One of the ways in which he hopes to recoup some of the huge costs of the attempt is by persuading computer owners to buy a game based on the event.

Last year's unsuccessful bid saw a video of the event, a calendar, and now we have the 64 game in which you can become millionaire tycoon — Branson, as well as waltzing off with the Blue Riband.

Doubtless if Challenger makes it through this time we will also be treated to an album of the event from one of Virgin's mega stars.

As you would expect from a game in which you play a Midas touch businessman bonus points are earned by making money as well as keeping Challenger II on course and on time.

The simple aim of the game is to break the existing record for crossing the Atlantic by sea.

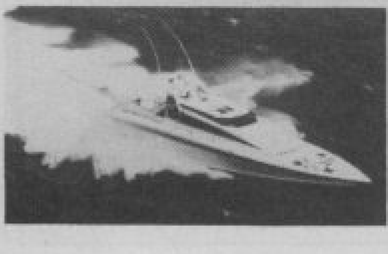
But it is not enough just to keep Challenger afloat through tending to her various bits of equipment through the eight separate control windows.

You must also watch the caption indicator at the foot of the screen constantly for news of your business empire.

The game will feature about a hundred different captions from Boy George not wanting to go on tour, to Phil Collins deciding to go classical.

You attend to Virgin's affairs through the telephone and telex housed in Richard's own Personal Communications Console — one of the eight play windows mentioned above.

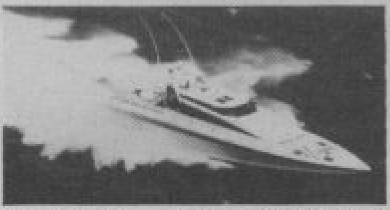
A money status counter at the top of the screen will increase or decrease depending on how effectively Branson



responds to the incoming messages about his business.

Challenger's Instruments

Most of the time Challenger is steered by computer control but at certain points in the game you will need to



override this — say when you spot hazards or you need to dock with the fuel ship.

One of your main ways of avoiding obstacles is to keep a close eye on the radar, especially at night. When a hazard has been identified you will need to quickly exit the Radar play window and switch to steering so that you can avoid it.

The Course and Navigation play windows are situated below the main deck.

The Course window shows a large map of the correct route, with the refuelling points, and possible hazards indicated as well as your current position.

If you discover that you are seriously off course you will need to switch to the Navigation window where you will find a compass and two different sets of co-ordinates. One of these is the correct one calculated by the computer. Using the joystick you must match up your actual co-ordinate with the one suggested by the computer.

As well as looking after all the Challenger's equipment and keeping her on course Richard has to take care of himself.

He needs to eat, take rest, and also feed the boat's moggy who has a tendency to demand food every time Richard eats.

You can make him skip one meal without too much effect but if you miss more than this you will begin to notice the effects of weakness such as lethargic response to the joystick.

THE GREAT



GIVEAWAY

Roll up, roll up for the great Virgin Games mega-giveaway. The games company have persuaded their colleagues in the rest fo the Virgin Group to stump a freebie for our super first prize of *A Virgin Bounty Bag*.

The bag contains five LP's of your choice from the Virgin record shops, a T-shirt of your choice from Virgin T-shirts, a Virgin Atlantic shoulder bag, posters, calendars, books, and a complete set of Virgin Games including *Shogun, Now Games I and II, Virgin Atlantic Challenger, Strangeloop, Sorcery*, and several others.

If you don't bag the bagful of goodies there are also twenty runners up prizes of the *Challenger* game.

It's one hell of a prize so get those entries into us now or for ever be a land lubber.

How to Win

1 What Virgin artist had his first hit with *Do you really want to hurt me?*
2 What Virgin artist flew the Atlantic in Concorde to perform at both Live Aid Concerts last Summer.
3 Virgin's first LP was Tubular Bells. Rearrange these letters to find the name of the artist. KEMI DLEIFLOD.

Answers

Question 1 ....

Question 2 ....

Question 3 ....

The ship or nautical event I would most like to see a simulation or computer games based on is? Because? (You may use a separate sheet of paper for this, if you wish) ....

....

....

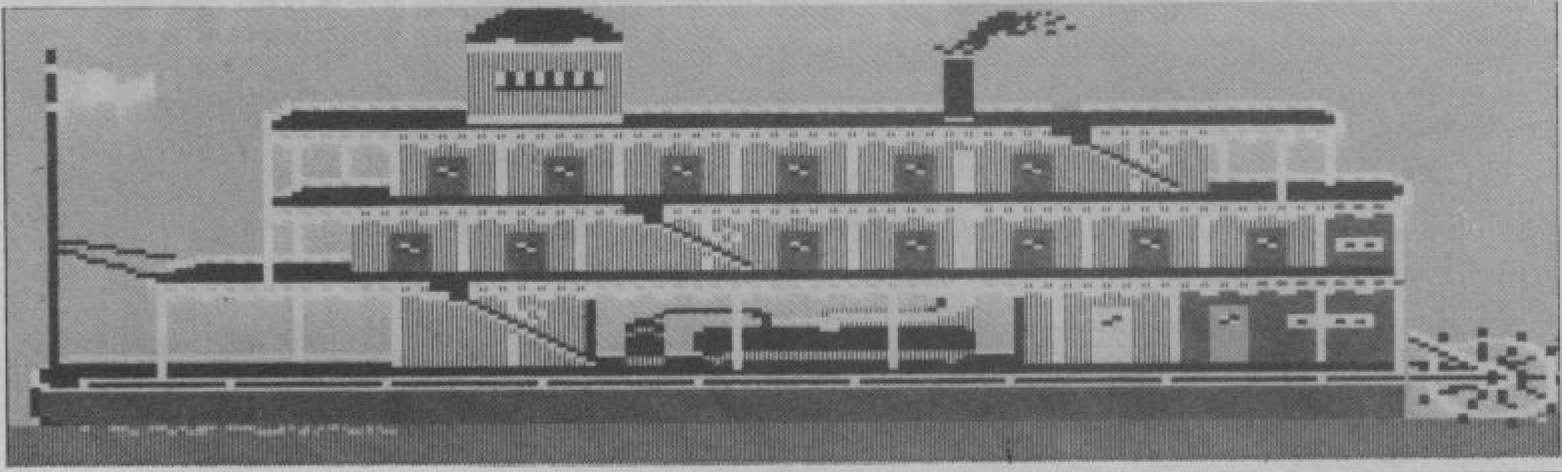
Name..

Address

....

....

Mark your entry 'Challenger Competition' and send it off to Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1M 3AU. Your entry must reach us before July 16, 1986.



● MURDER ON THE MISSISSIPPI

COMMODORE 64/128
ACTIVISION
Price: £14.95 (disk only)

Activision, (coincidentally, the new parent company of Infocom) have a real winner on their hands. *Murder on the Mississippi* is an animated graphical adventure set in turn of the century America on a paddle steamer called The Delta Princess. You play the part of famed British sleuth, Sir Charles Foxworth, who, along with his trusty companion Regis, is enjoying a well earned rest aboard this luxury floating palace.

Using joystick or keyboard you can move Sir Charles all over the four deck ship exploring the many locations which include over 20 cabins, a state room, a salon, and the wheelhouse or engine room. I have to say here that as a rule I don't like graphics in adventures unless they are really worth looking at, and as this game relies heavily on its animation, the graphics and F/X need to be of the highest quality which thankfully, they are.

Anyway, on with the story. In one of the cabins you'll eventually come across a body lying in a pool of blood and because of your relentless curiosity you decide to find out who did this grisly deed and why.

There are eight other passengers and a couple of crew on board — all with seemingly foolproof alibis — so, who did it? My first job was to visit the captain and he very helpfully gave me the register containing passenger details and their cabin numbers. Armed with this information I went to their cabins and started questioning them looking for a few clues and some evidence. All the interviewing is undertaken by a series of menus, which by the use of a 'hand' cursor can be highlighted and entered.

For instance, selecting 'inspect' will have Sir Charles inspecting the nearest thing to him. Anything of use that you find can be picked up by Regis and put in his pocket for later examination. The secret of this game is getting the characters to say the right things, and by clever manipulation of evidence found and shown to the right people.

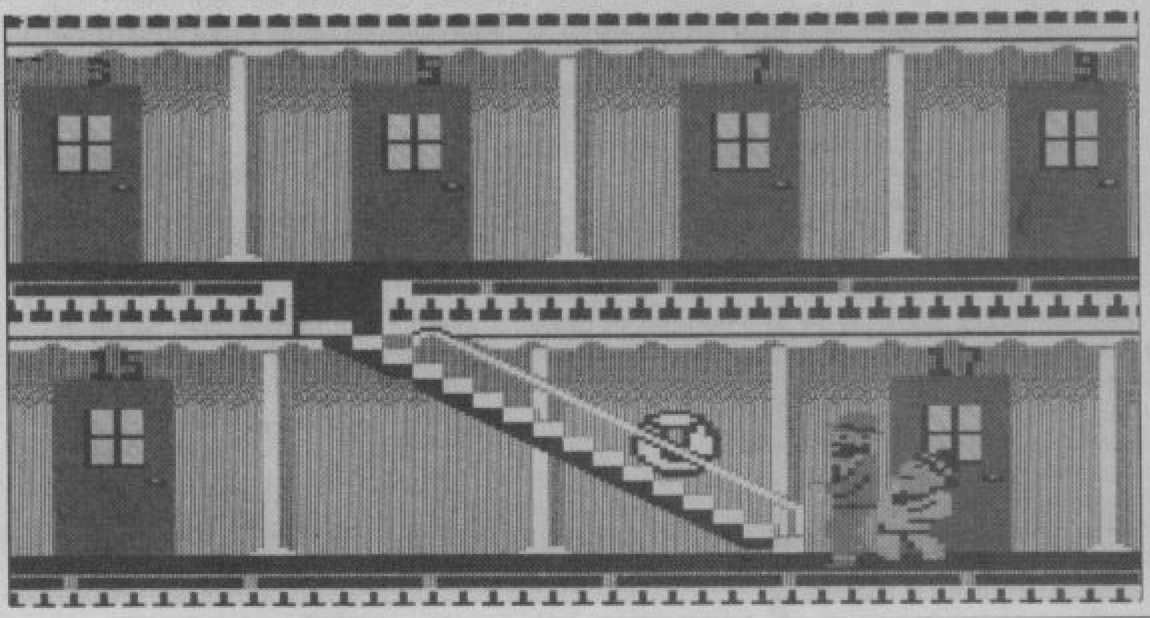
▲ **All aboard the Delta Princess for a murderous cruise.**

A very useful and clever device is your 'notebook'. During your conversation with the other characters you can take notes on their replies. This is instigated by Regis who will say "would you like the notebook m'Lord?" Answering 'yes' you'll see the characters' statement on a blank screen. Using the cursor you can highlight certain words which will appear in the 'notebook' in Sir Charles own handwriting — very stylish. These notes can later be shown to other characters who may or may not react in a strange way!

So, who killed Raleigh Cartwright III? Was it Judge Carter, a man who is clearly used to violence or Madam Des Plaines, the rich widow, or Daisy du Pree, a sexy southern belle who isn't what she seems, or Engineer Henry Stoker, illegitimate son of the dead Raleigh??? The list goes on. The sting in the tail is that you only have three days to solve the crime!

I must confess to being very impressed by this program, its use of text and animation, is superb and the atmosphere it evokes is excellent.

Andy Moss



Right behind you guve — dedicated Negis follows his sleuthing master, Sir Charles Foxworth. ▲

Graphics	9
Sound	n/a
Toughness	9
Endurance	8
Value	8
Overall	**8**


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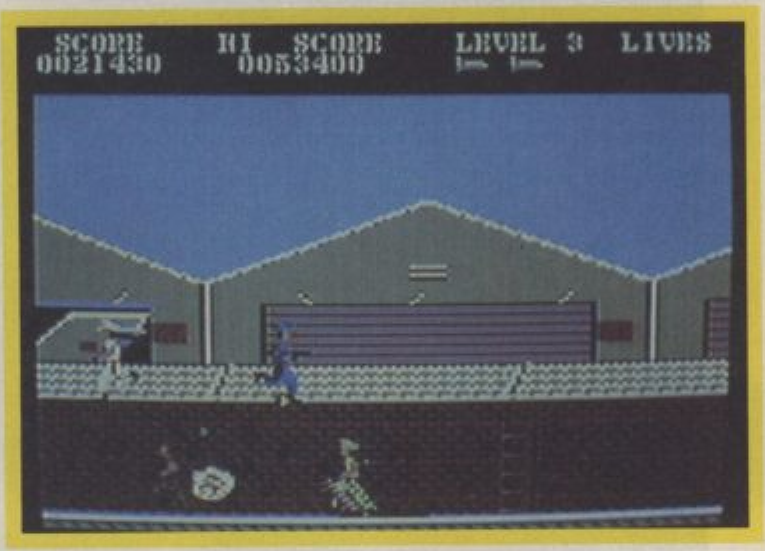
GREEN BERET

COMMODORE 64/128
IMAGINE
Price: £9.95/cass £14.95/disk

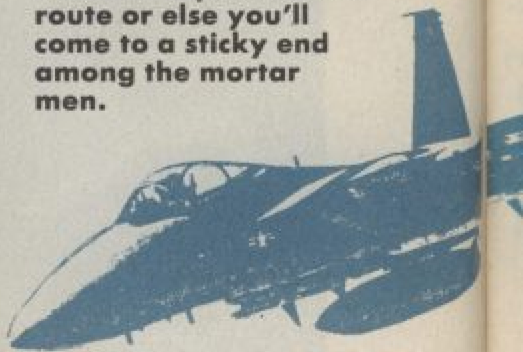


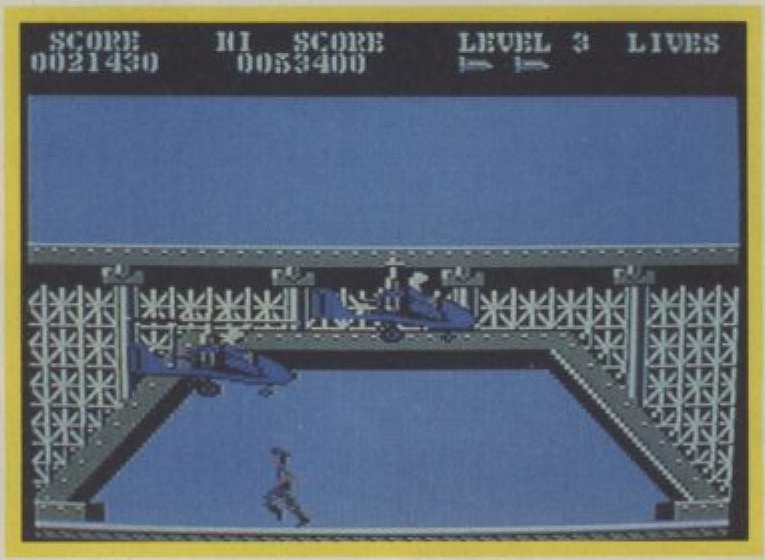
The arcade game makers can be as guilty as the software programmers in relying on a successful formula. *Green Beret* or as it was nauseatingly described in America *Russian Attack* is another righwards scrolling game in the mode of *Kung Fu Master*, and the just converted *Ghosts and Goblins*.

Like the latter it cannot be denied that *Green Beret* is fast action. The kind of the thing that will always succeed if it is done properly. And there's no denying that the Imagine team haven't made a bad job of this despite the odd glitch.



Make your way past the hangers. Take the top of the wall route or else you'll come to a sticky end among the mortar men.





A particularly nasty challenge to overcome at the end of the third level. A knife is all you need, but aim dead centre of the sprites for a hit.

'Rescue the captives' is the simple message you are told as the game begins and your man runs past a group of struggling soldiers tied to poles.

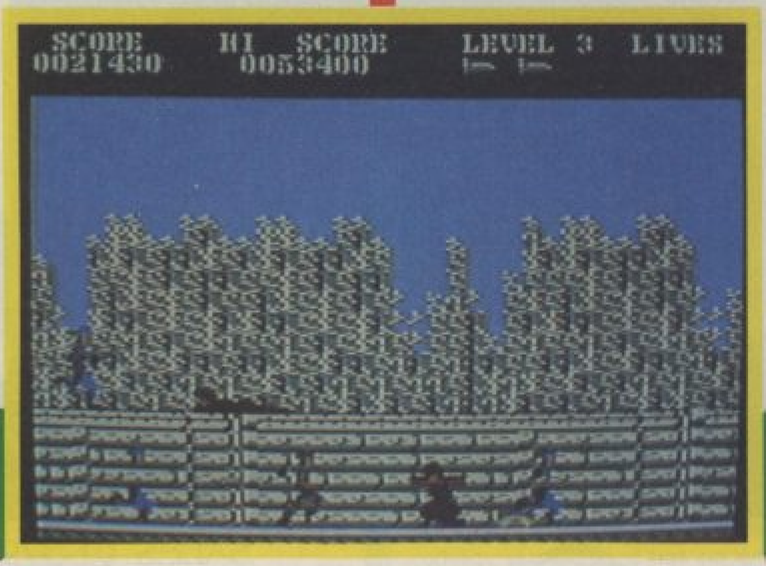
Stab the fire button and you're transported to the beginning of the game fifty or so screens away from the hostages. A drum begins a pulsating military tattoo that lasts until the game gets turned off. A siren sounds to alert the guards and you begin your run through the first level.

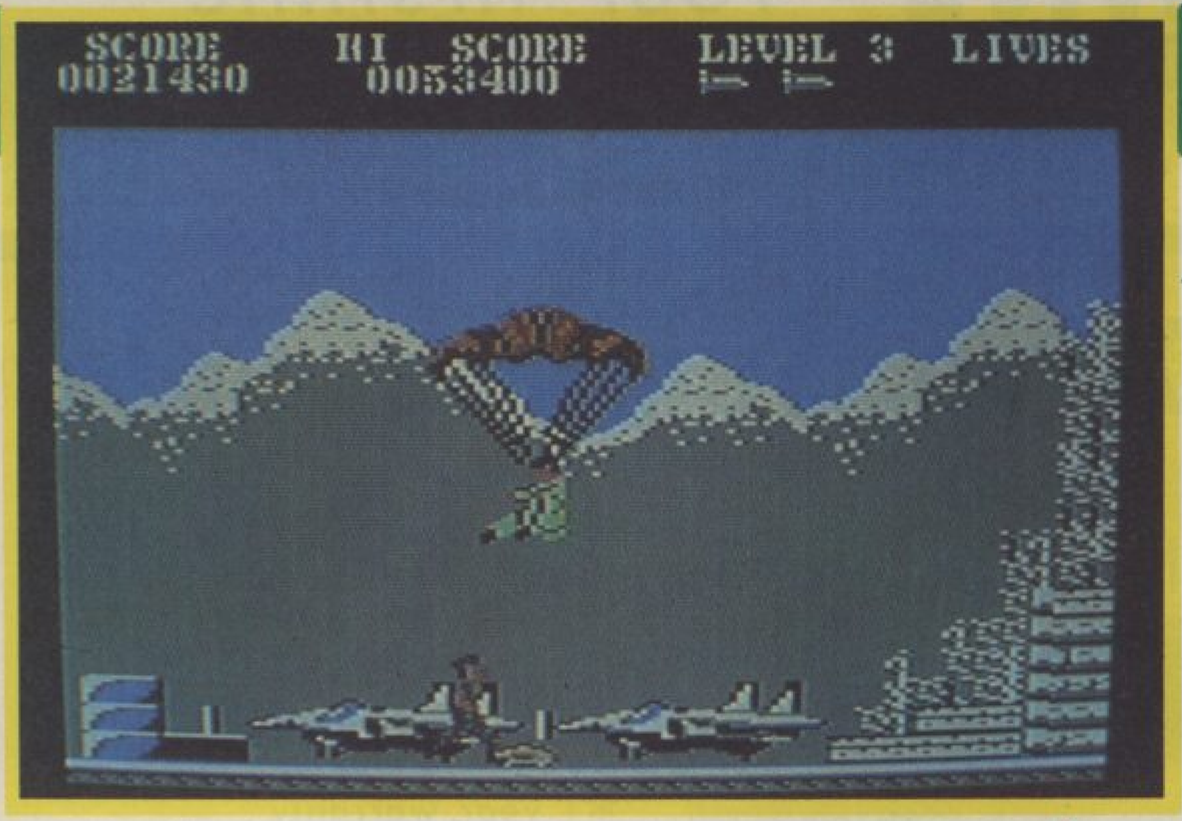
Immediately you'll realise the odds you're up against. There's an array of guards armed with bazookas, machine guns and deadily kicks. There's crawling troops, mortar emplacements, parachutists and



Level two and the going gets tough. Head up to the top of the fence.

The artic forest. Eat dirt because the bazooka carrier's about to let fly.





As you head into the airforce base more parachutists drop out of the sky and shower you.







The gun emplacements. Who do you deal with first — the guard or the para?

gyrocopters. Your only protection is your knife and your wits. Occasionally you'll kill one of the white troops and collect a special weapon that'll give you three shots. The flamethrower is the best of these, sending a huge orange jet across the screen. Great fun.

The thing that'll strike you most is how little time you have to think. There's no rest spots in this game. Delay only makes matters worse as troops rush out in greater numbers — and more often than not — shoot you in the back.

You'll find you need to hit the dirt a lot if you're going to survive. Lying down and stabbing is particularly effective because you're below the level of fire from machine gunners and bazooka carriers.

Get that white commander before he escapes — his special weapon will improve your chances no end.



Should you suffer the misfortune of an early death among the sniper fire and mortar shells, which seems likely, you won't suffer the anguish of being sent back to the beginning. You'll begin at a predetermined position along the way.

Each level ends with a particularly mean challenge. Level one has a truck load of reinforcements turn up. The sub base has a pack of guard dogs unleashed on you, and level three has three gyrocopters careering around the screen. The knife will suffice for all of them, but it's worth saving a few shots from your special weapon to deal with these moments of crisis.

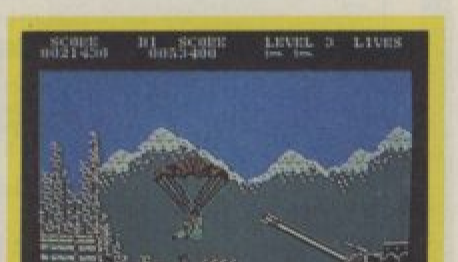
The graphics throughout are splendid. Your man is of a reasonable size, something I always like to see. Small characters make you screw your eyes up a bit. He is well animated as are all the troops, and the backgrounds are colourful. There's only one real colour clash and that's in the container area on level two where your man gets a bit lost against the black crates. Otherwise despite the odd glitch it's very easy on the eye and effective.

The sound throughout has all the quality we've come to expect from Martin Gallway. There's a massive loading tune, that persistent drumbeat and a myriad of sound effects like explosions, gunshots and sirens — all adding to the atmosphere of the game.

Green Beret has definitely been worth the wait. It's all here, with every aspect packed in to the 64K of the Commodore. Although I get the impression the actual gameplay can become a little wearing with its charge, stab, charge, stab routine, I think you'll be playing this one for a long time. It's a really tough challenge, believe me, and no game is ever quite the same given the timing of your movements.

In giving this a screen star I add the rider that I'd like to see something new done with the 64 for a change.

Mike Pattenden



Aaargh! One more step and you'll tread on a mine. Try and jump up and you'll hit the para. Looks like the end . . .

	Rating (1–10)
Graphics	9
Sound	8
Toughness	9
Endurance	8
Value	8

9 Overall

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COMMODORE 64/128
CREATIVE SPARKS
Price: £1.99/cass

Good grief! Creative Sparks have released this again. After flopping about six months ago what will happen now that good ol' D.M. is at a budget price?

For those of you who haven't seen or heard of *Danger Mouse* he is a wonderful little mouse, with a penthouse flat in a Baker Street post-box. His occupation is full-time super-hero, and he is needed with the evil frog Baron Silas Greenback forever plotting plans to rule the world. Danger Mouse like all good super-heroes also has an assistant, this one comes in the shape of the half-wit, cowardly mole Penfold. But don't expect him to be much help.

In this escapade our hero has been putting his feet up for a couple of weeks and is starting to think that maybe Greenback has given up at last.

Wishful thinking. All of a sudden up comes Colonel K., head of security on the video screen informing you that Greenback is up to his usual antics again. "He's been in the jungle building a clone of you D.M. so it can impersonate you and infiltrate our security forces".

Good grief, only the world's greatest super-hero Danger Mouse can stop him. First it's into the aerocar and on your way to the jungle, but it looks like Greenback is one step ahead of you. He has sent out a party of robots to stop you in your tracks!

To kill each robot you must be facing it and then select the correct picture and tune from your computer jukebox which is shown in the bottom-left of the screen. It's on to feet now as even an aerocar isn't versatile enough to get through the tough terrain of the jungle. The first obstacle you must cross is the crocodile infested swamps. This is done by using the crocodiles as stepping stones, à la Frogger.

You must also watch out for the deadly black, mouse-eating pumas. To scare these away you must go to the top of a nearby tree and do a tarzan-call so a herd of elephants will run past and scare him away, but on the tree there are snakes and monkeys with twice the strength of you, who will throw you off the tree at the slightest touch.

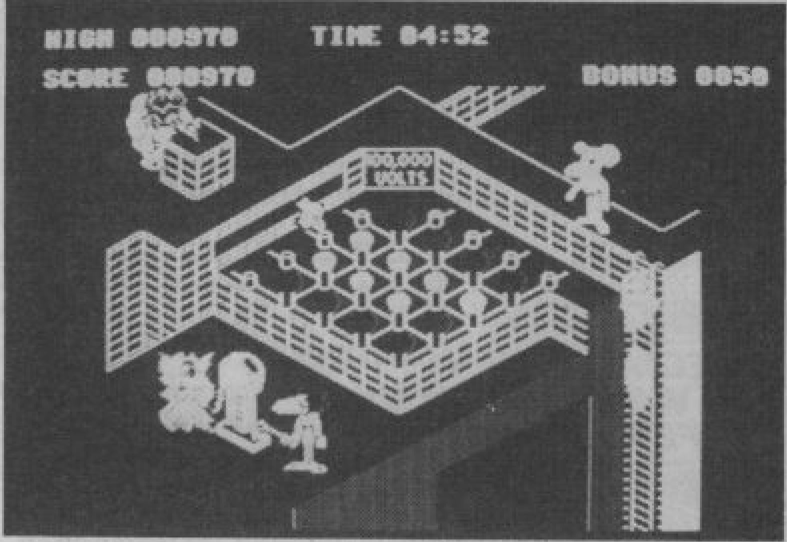
The third episode is quite tricky to get the hang of but after a while you will soon pick it up. The D.M. clone is almost complete as you arrive at their base. Suddenly you hear a strange buzzing sound coming from the floor, Greenback's rigged it so that there's thousands of volts running through each tile, step on it and you're Sunday roast!

The only way to short-circuit the Baron's plan is to activate the four switches in the right order and so destroy any signals Greenback sends out. This part of the game is wonderfully animated. You see a well-drawn picture of D.M. launch below onto the switches whilst balancing on his index finger!

When this has been done it's hip, hip hooray. Well done D.M. and all the rest but don't be too happy, you have to do it all over again but with a shorter time limit!

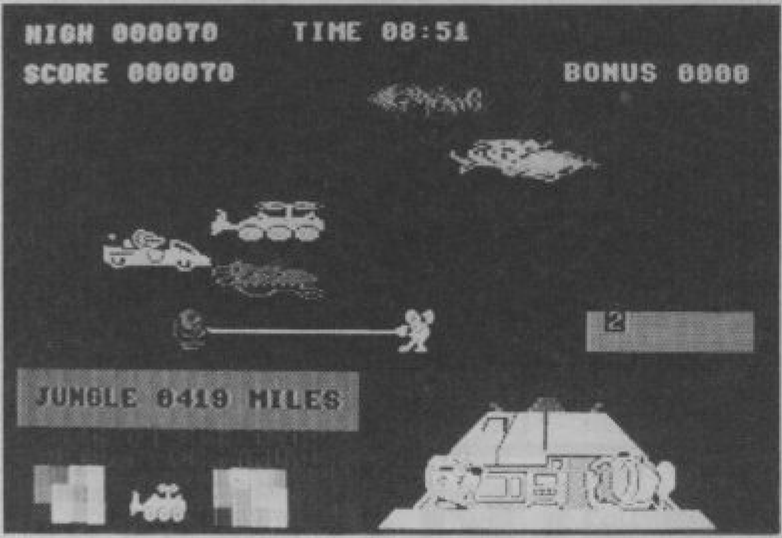
Creative Sparks have brought out a reasonable re-release and I see no reason why it shouldn't do well at its cheaper price. A must for all Danger Mouse fans.

Ferdy Hamilton



▲ **Super rodent takes on the nasties.**

Heave — pull that nasty Greenback out of your way. ▼



	Score (1–10)
Graphics	7
Sound	4
Toughness	7
Endurance	6
Value	7
Overall	**6**

BOMBO

COMMODORE 64/128
FIREBIRD
Price: £7.95/cass

Commodore music wizard Rob Hubbard has some competition at last in the shape of We. Music Ltd — the people that coded the tunes for Bombo.

As you can see from the pics it owes more than a passing resemblance to the Tehkan coin-op — Bombjack, which has recently been released by Elite at £9.95. That game got praised two issues back with high marks for Graphics, Toughness, and Endurance. *Bombo* matches these marks and scores very highly in the sound department as well.

The game features several excellent tunes that change each time you get onto a new level.

Bombo has to collect twenty bombs from each screen whilst dodging the Eyes, Footmen, Birds, Drones, Hives, and Revolvers that are patrolling the platforms.

The opening screen features an Arabian fortress with an exotic Turkish Delight TV commercial piece of music accompanying it.

Bombo moves around the screen by taking large leaps when you press the fire button. Once he has taken off you can only guide him left and right, until he finally sinks back to the ground, or onto one of the platforms. You can also make him drop immediately by pulling back on the joystick.

Manouevring Bombo is the real skill element in the game. You have to be careful to judge exactly where you want him to land before you make the leap.

Working your way through the barrels is easy peasy until you try to collect them in sequence — each flashing barrel after another, to earn bonus points.

Sometimes the flashing barrel will be at the top of a pile of ordinary ones — so you have to work out how to get to the top. Tough, I can tell you, but good fun too.

Every so often the game lobs a power pill at you. Grab this and *Bombo* turns gold and dons a cloak which enables him to fly anywhere he likes without any nasties getting in the way. The power also turns the barrels gold for a short time adding several points to their value.

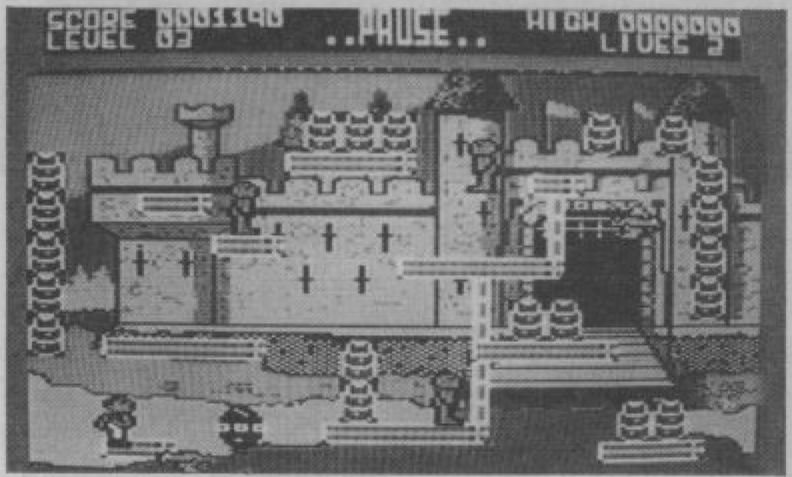
Each structure of platforms is different and set against a colourful backdrop. Screen two is a city skyline of grey office blocks. This time the music is uptempo — the best piece on the whole game in my opinion.

The third and final backdrop is a Disney style castle — very much like the one in the real Bombjack game.

One of the slightly disappointing

Start here — the desert fortress





Shades of Bombjack — the Disney-style castle.

parts of *Bombo* is that there are only three different backdrops. After conquering the castle I was disappointed to find that you go straight back to the Arabian fortress again — though it is a tougher version, with a different platform layout.

Comparisons with the official version of *Bombjack* are inevitably going to be made so I will put mine in now — I prefer the Elite offering. It's that little bit tougher than *Bombo*.

After only an hour on the Rino game I had been right through all three back-drops and was onto my second turn on the Arabian fortress.

On the plus side *Bombo* is £2 cheaper and has much better music than *Bombjack*.

Generally I am a fan of both of these games. They have that one thing that I find irresistible in any 64 game — power pills. There is just something crazily exciting about those few seconds when you can charge around the screen gobbling bonuses without a nasty in sight. I swear it was this that made Pac Man the success that it was.

So the choice is yours. *Bombo* offers better frills at only £2 less — but *Bombjack* is the official version if that's what you want, and it is a slightly more playable game as well.

Eugene Lacey

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

7 Overall

WHITE VIPER

COMMODORE 64/128 CREATIVE SPARKS

Price: £1.99/cass

More and more software houses are bringing out their own budget labels, the latest in line is Creative Sparks with their Sparklers label. They've done it in the Americana mould and brought out old games but at a cheaper price. This game in particular, though, hasn't been previously released.

You become a hero who is known around town as the White Viper because of the large white snake on your family's coat of arms. While you were out walking one day you saw an evil spirit come along and snatch your beautiful wife away. So being the gallant knight you are, it's off to get your armour only to find that it has been taken.

There are five parts to successfully completing the game. The first of which is probably the easiest I have ever encountered. You are in the forest with the princess and you must stop the evil spirits from getting her and your armour, by chopping them up with your sword. You gain an extra life for every spirit killed. But seven lives is the maximum you can get.

The next thing you must do is capture a trusty steed so you can set off in pursuit of your true love. This is done by fencing him in with bits of the perimeter fence — but watch out, for every so often out comes an evil spirit and it's bye-bye to your fence. Be careful because every bit of fence is precious if you're hoping to catch that steed. This isn't too tricky but can start to get tedious after a while.

The next section though, had me completely flummoxed. How you are actually meant to complete this is beyond me. You have now mounted your horse and must jump across the lake from island to island collecting bits of armour. How far you jump depends on how long you keep the fire button depressed, and as if that wasn't hard enough there is a nice little swamp fairy who is more than willing to send you back to scratch.

The last two parts of the game are feeding time and the rescue but I could not manage to get up to these and I doubt if you will either.

White Viper is nothing special and has nothing that makes it especially interesting. In all fairness I can't see any reason for anyone to buy it other than the price.

Ferdy Hamilton

The lone horseman prepares to cross the swamp in White Viper



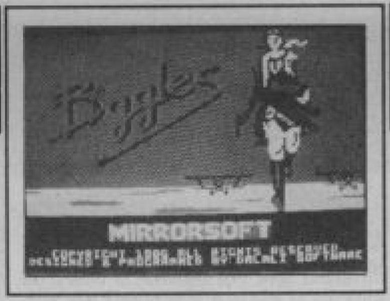
Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

5 Overall

BIGGLES

COMMODORE 64/128 MIRRORSOFT

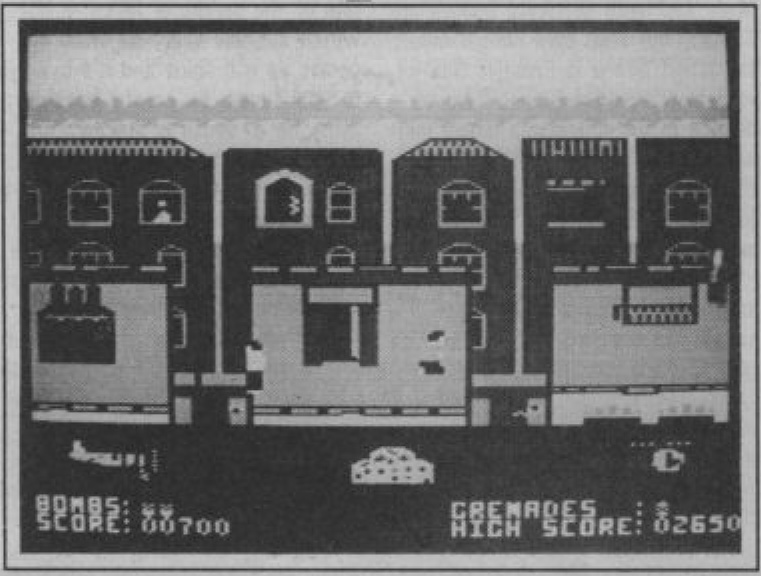
Price: £9.95/cass



Biggles is here. What do you mean, boo? So you've already seen the film. Well, maybe the game will be a little better.

Anyway, here's the story. Biggles is sitting peacefully at home (probably reading *Commodore User*) when — kappow — he is transported to 1917 where he's sitting in a two seater bi-plane with Jim. By the way, Jim is Biggles' 'time-twin' who's also been transported.

Chunky, blocky graphics don't do Biggles any favours.



Between them, they must fly across enemy territory to locate and photograph 'the weapon'. Obviously they're constantly under attack from enemy field guns and menacing, mean and merciless Captain Erich von Stalhein (boo, hiss). Our heroes have only two bombs to begin with but can get more by hitting enemy weapon dumps.

If the plane is shot down (which it frequently is) Biggles and Jim are transported to '86 where they must climb and jump across London rooftops patrolled by SAS guards. You control either one or the other player, changing control from one to another to avoid the guards. There are also a few snipers firing at you from windows. Luckily they don't fire straight ahead, only at angles. One hit and they're back to 1917 on a First World War battlefield.

Here, Jim or Biggles (I can't tell which) must battle his way past the enemy to find the 'weapon' test-site. This section reminds me a little of *Rambo* or *Commando* — one man's efforts against a whole army. The screen is split in two showing the ground itself as well as the underground caves and trenches. You climb down ladders into the trenches to collect grenades for lobbing at the enemy pill-boxes.

Again, if you're hit you're back to the bi-plane — and so it goes on. I think sections appear randomly but you must complete them in order: bi-plane, London rooftops and then the battlefield. The latter two can't be completed until you've finished the first.

Below the actions screen are three symbols — a plane, a bag and a helicopter — corresponding to the three sections. Each gradually disintegrates when Biggles is in danger. The game ends when one of these symbols is completely gone.

One bonus is that side two of the tape contains a helicopter simulator

The Commando style section. Do Elite know about this?!

CAVERNS OF ERIBAN

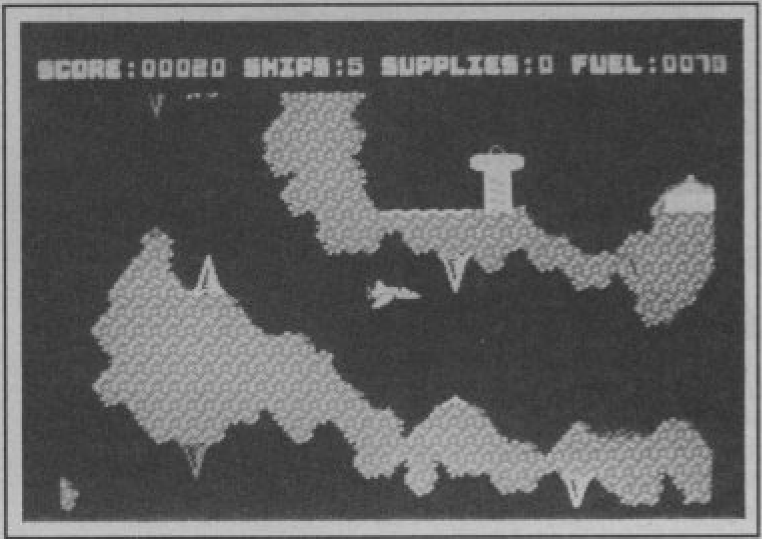
COMMODORE 64/128 FIREBIRD (SILVER RANGE)

Price: £1.99/cass

Firebird are obviously out to encroach on Mastertronic's outright superiority in the cheapy software market. If *Caverns Of Eriban* is indicative of what's to come, they stand every chance of being successful.

As the pilot of a mine supply ship, your job is to enter the Caverns Of Eriban (somewhere near Stevenage I think) and deliver the supplies to the mining depots.

In all there are twenty-five depots all desperately in need of their week's supply of lamps, drill bits, canaries, shredded wheat, clean socks, shaving foam, blow-up plastic ladies, and all the other things that make life down a mine a little more bearable.



The only problem is that your weedy little supply ship can only carry enough supplies for five depots at a time. The first job then, is to land at one of the five supply depots on the surface and pick up some stuff. Then it's the long descent into the caverns.

This is very tricky indeed. The major cause of disaster is the planet's (I suppose they mean Stevenage) ancient defence mechanisms. Homing missiles, stalactites, dripping deadly acid, bouncing balloons, bubbling lava pools and other 'thingies' all lie in wait.



If the defence mechanism doesn't get you you'll probably make a pretty good job of destroying yourself.

Your ship has a sort of two-speed gearbox. If you push the joystick say, left, naturally enough you go left. But hold it there for a second and you go into overdrive. All very well until you need to stop. If you let go you'll come to a rest soon, but not usually soon enough. Turning round and applying a bit of reverse thrust will do the trick, but it takes a while to get the timing right.

Meanwhile be prepared to spend a lot of time crashing into walls. The caverns have many tight corners and narrow gaps and it takes practice and a fair amount of patience to make a worthwhile impact. This

Tricky stuff negotiating the Caves of Eriban

BIGGLES

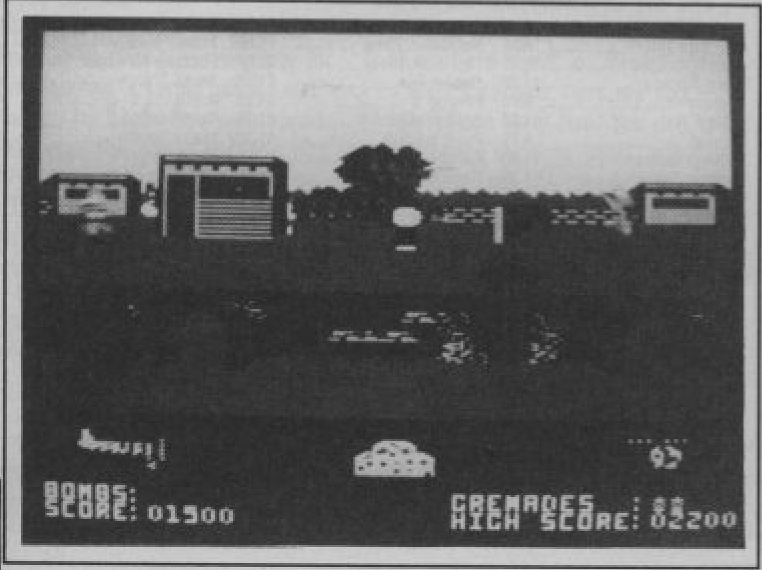
in which Biggles is seized by a 1986 helicopter and is transported back to 1917. Here you must locate and destroy the 'secret weapon', picking up spies, guns and ammunition on the way to help you.

Graphics for both sides of the game are pretty blocky and not very special, and the music (which plays throughout) is mediocre. But the game itself is fun to play, although the constant switching between sections may annoy some people.

Richard Bradbury

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

6 Overall



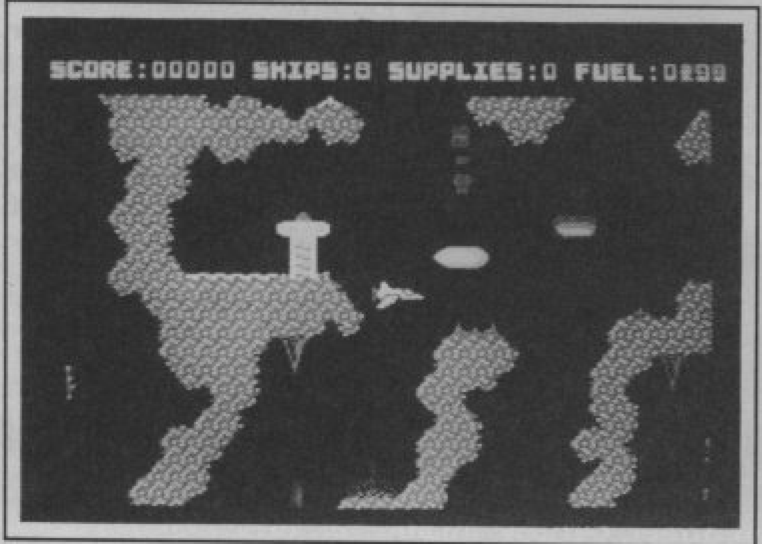
month's super hot tip is: find neutral zones where you can take a rest without being blown to bits.

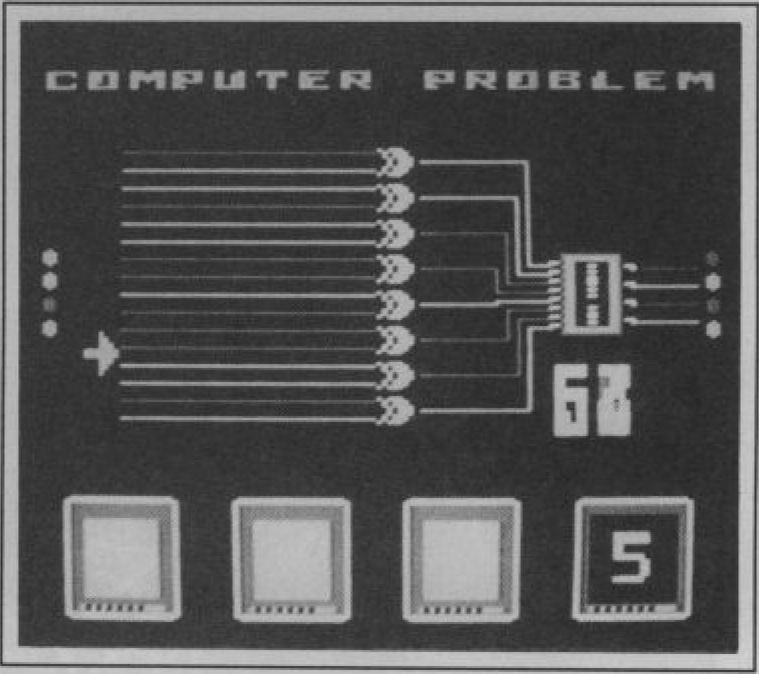
Caverns of Eriban is well worth two quid of anyone's money. Incidentally I don't think authors get nearly enough credit for games, so to put the record straight this month: Caverns was written by Lee Braine and the music (which is very good) by Chris Cox and Ian Cray.

Ken McMahon

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

8 Overall





One of the more complex sub games in The Comet Game. Anyone seen Max?

THE COMET GAME

COMMODORE 64/128 FIREBIRD

Price: £7.95/cass

At long last, we've seen (if you had a telescope) the back of Haley's Comet, and good riddance to what must have been the non-event of the century.

Anyway, the plot goes something like this. Haley's Comet is believed to have thousands of little toxic germs surrounding it and a ship has been sent up there to shoot the little creatures before they explode into the earth's atmosphere.

Sounds like the plot to a normal fast and addictive shoot-em-up right? Wrong. You don't get the chance to launch into space and shoot everything in sight, you're not even the pilot. You're just the boring old ship's computer.

There are five main problems to negotiate, each one being a little sub-game in itself.

Computer Argument:
There are four little LED's that will light up in a random order in the left hand side of the screen. You must match that order by lighting up the four on the right-hand side using the correct connectors — about as exciting as wiring a plug.

Antenna alignment:
Now read carefully as this game is very complex. Move the joystick left and right to align the antenna with the highest frequency before time runs out.

Interplanetary Safeguard:
Can you survive a thirty-second bout of Missile Command? You probably can but won't want to bother.

Life Support Infestation:
Blast the Germ-bags out of the oxygen supply before time runs out.

Coffee Game:
How do you keep an astronaut who's in suspended animation in good shape? Apparently you tank him up with coffee — brilliant idea! Activate the correct icons to make your astronaut a cup of coffee but keep a good watch on the "P" icon and make sure he doesn't wet himself. Kindergarten jokes at their rock bottom worst! Someone at Firebird is possessed by an extremely flatulent streak of toilet humour.

After all this, I am told that you are put into low-orbit and given the opportunity to shoot all those nasty little lumps of bacteria. But to be honest, it's not worth the bother of going through this rubbish!

Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Sound 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Toughness 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Endurance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Value 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3 Overall

SHARK

C16 and Plus/4 FIREBIRD (SILVER RANGE)

Price: £1.99/cass

Just when you thought it was safe to go back in the water. Well, I had to say it somewhere, might as well get it out of the way now.

I can't make up my mind about *Shark*. When I first set eyes on it I thought oh, groan, not another duffer from Firebird. When I'd played it for a while though, it went up ever so slightly in my estimation.

You are the intrepid diver, out to rid the waters of deadly man eaters. The Great White (it's always a Great White) swims back and forth across the surface while you lurk in the murky depths.

This particular breed of Great White shark, very conveniently (or stupidly) has a target placed half way up its back. One well aimed shot from the trusty harpoon hits the target, and it's goodbye sharkey.

There are a few bits of piping lying around the place to provide some cover to the poor animal. All the same, it's not too difficult at this level and you can usually make it first shot, ensuring a hefty bonus for your remaining air supply. Level two adds more of a challenge to the proceedings. Anaemic looking eels swim up and down, making it even more difficult, or rather, less easy, to get a shot in. Still plenty of air left by the time I managed it though.

Level three has you avoiding a killer goldfish which swims up and down erratically and kills on contact, slightly tricky, not, by any means, impossible.

On the next level you are dive bombed by something that could either be a squid, or a jellyfish.

Wait a second, here are the jellyfish on level five. You can tell the difference because squid, jellyfish and eels, get the picture? It's seafood salad time.

Maybe I expect too much from cheapo games. But the gap between this and some of the more expensive stuff is far wider than you find on, say, Commodore 64 games.

If you're fairly new to gaming *Shark* will undoubtedly give you a few hours cheap entertainment. Firebird will have to do better than this, though, if they're going to match companies like Mastertronic.

Ken McMahon



The shark very obligingly wears a target on its side.

	Score (scale 1–10)
Graphics	3
Sound	2
Toughness	2
Endurance	2
Value	3
Overall	**3**

RUNNER

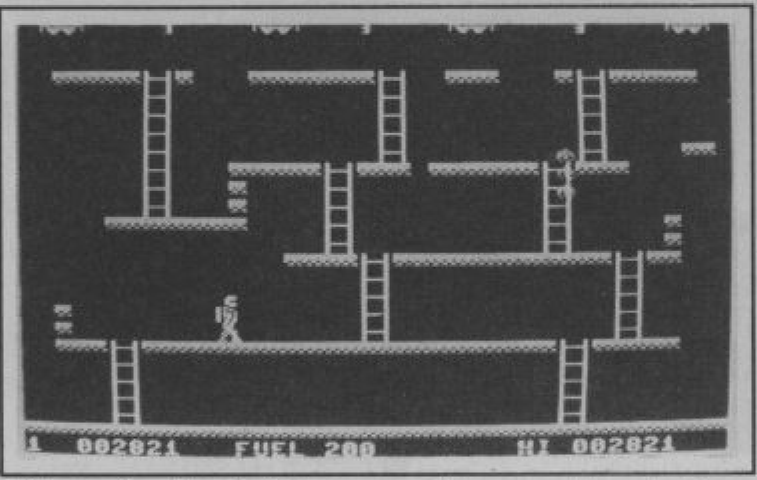
C16 and Plus/4 FIREBIRD (SILVER RANGE)

Price: £1.99/cass

If you find yourself in the unfortunate position of having to actually consider this, take a look at the screen shots on the cassette pack. No one can accuse Firebird of being misleading, it's all there. Sparse screens with boring looking yellow platforms connected by ladders, my my, how original. And there in the centre of this minimalist landscape, our hero.

At the top of the screen there are three keys and three vents. The vents occasionally chuck out a boulder or a 'mutant pod' — not that I could spot the difference. The pods, or boulders whizz down the platforms and you lose a life should one hit you. You must make your way to the top of the screen and collect the three keys, before losing all your lives to the cascading boulders.

To help you in this moderately difficult task you have the faithful old jetpack. A burst on the joystick button sends you a giddy centimetre into the air. You have limited fuel so it's a good idea not to get carried away with your new toy.



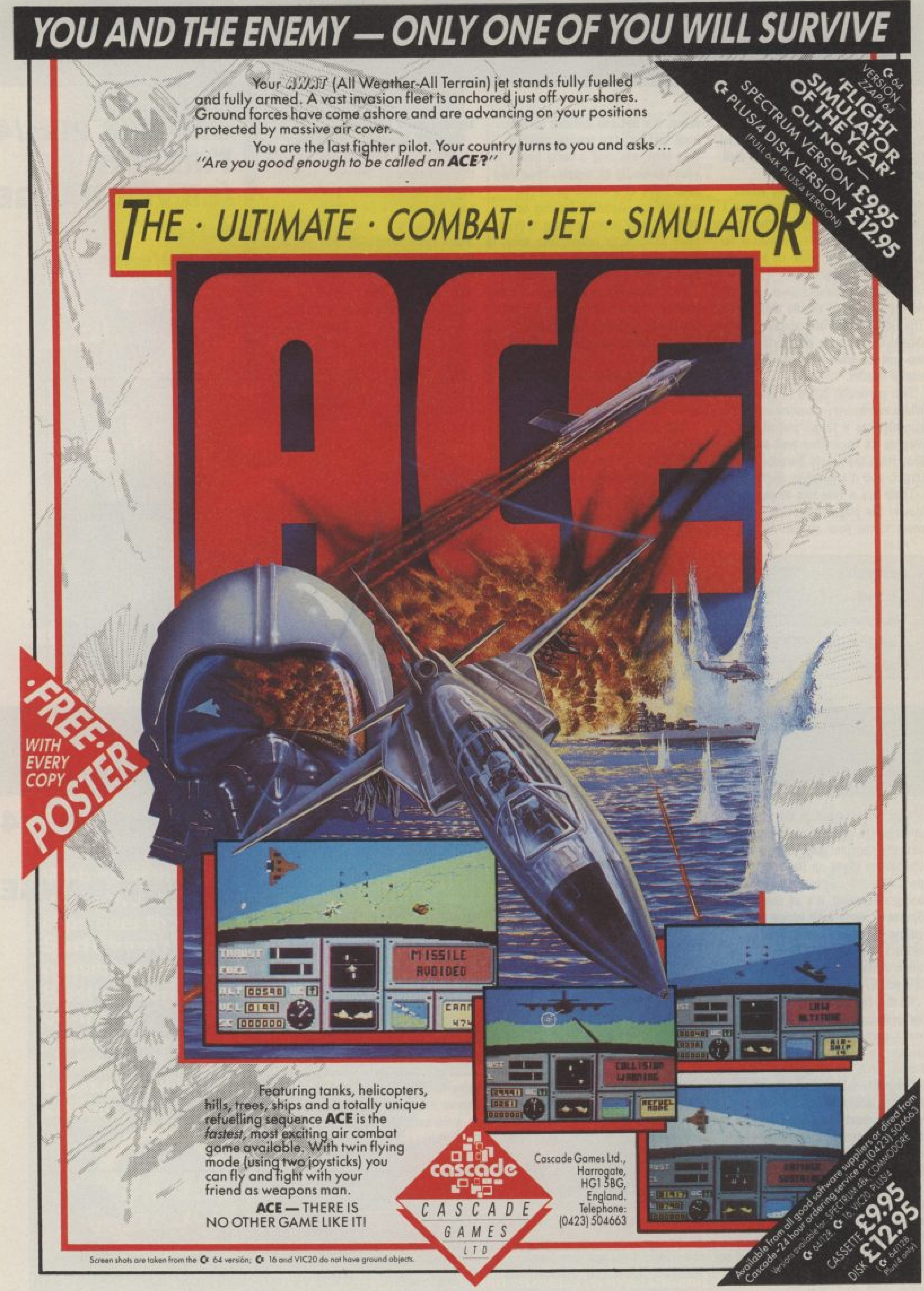
Risk terminal boredom by collecting the keys at the top of the screen.

When you've collected all three keys, you get a bonus and a crack at the next screen — wow. There are three basic problems with the game. First, it's too simple, second the graphics are boring, third, there's not a single original thing about it.

It's hard to imagine how a £2 game could be so poor as to be not worth the money, but this kind of thing truly depresses me. Kevin Moughtin, the author obviously has the programming skills to produce something reasonably good, but *Runner* has about as much originality as a Bernard Manning joke, and is as much fun.

Ken McMahon

	Score (scale 1–10)
Graphics	1
Sound	
Toughness	4
Endurance	2
Value	2
Overall	**2**


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Screen shots are taken from the C 64 version; C 16 and VIC20 do not have ground objects.

● DIRTY DEN

COMMODORE 64/128
PROBE SOFTWARE
Price: 6.95/cass

Eastenders has taken the country's TV screens by storm since it began last year, and with characters like Denis Watts, the conniving landlord it's no wonder. He's in so many different places that it's no wonder he should turn up in a computer game.

Actually *Dirty Den* just happens to have the same name as this very popular character. In this case, though, our Dennis is the complete antithesis of his TV namesake.

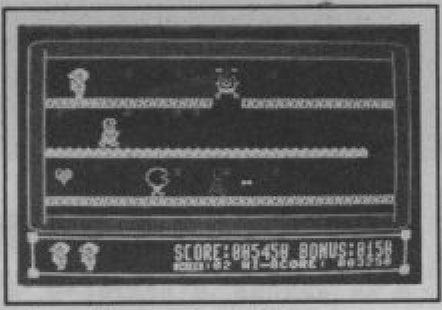
He's chivalrous — in fact a real gent. He's in hot pursuit of his loved one captured by a frustrated old wizard. He just has a bit of a body odour problem, o.k.?

The object of the game is to work your way through some twenty or more screens of hectic platforms peopled by a variety of nasties until you reach the room where your lass is being held.

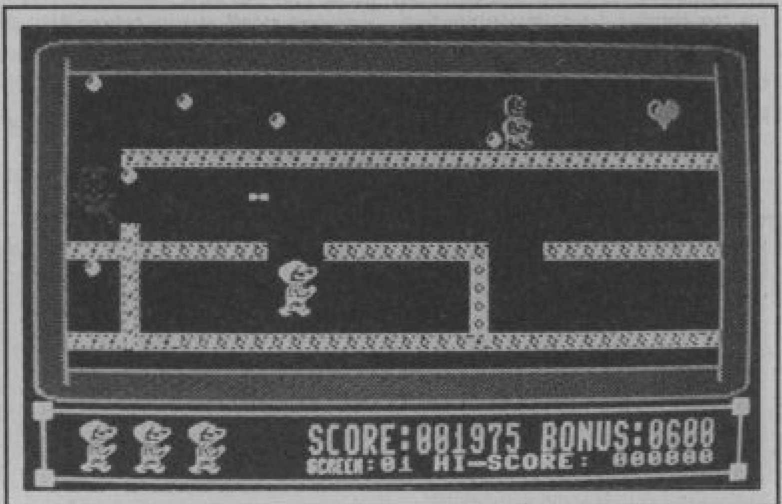
En route you'll have to collect the dozens of chocolates distributed all round the passageways. These you'll need to give to your greedy pig of a girlfriend when you find her. All because the lady loves Milk Tray ... personally I'd rather have a Bourneville selection, but I'm spoilt.

Graphics are nice and colourful and the game plays quickly, with a fairly tough challenge that should keep you at the keyboard for a while.

Mike Pattenden



More chocolates and more nasties to avoid as DD progresses through the screens.



Just another platform game — jump to collect the chocolates before reaching the heart, and then next screen.



Category	Rating (1–10)
Graphics	6
Sound	3
Toughness	6
Endurance	6
Value	6

6 Overall

● Dirty Den Competition

We all know that Dirty Den the game has nothing to do with Dirty Den, the Eastenders dastardly double-dealing landlord Den Watts, which is why we thought we'd have an Eastenders competition.

Fergus McGovern of Probe Software has generously offered to put up thirty copies of the game plus an extra prize of a Seiko UC 1000 computerised watch. All you soap fans have to do is answer a few questions:



1) What's the name of Den's pub in Albert Square?
2) What's the name of his dog? (the poodle).
3) What is the name of Pauline and Arthur's son, now living in Southend?
4) What fictional London football team does Arthur support?

And now the tie-breaker, the one we love to set you. Right, we're going to ask you to be a bit nasty here. Characters are always getting killed off in soap operas. So far everyone in Eastenders has escaped the grim reaper. So we want you to tell us which character you would most like to see get the chop and why.

All answers to be in by July 15, 1986. The judge's (i.e. my) decision is absolutely final and nobody who has any dealings with the mag can enter, so there, Ken.

Answers
1) ....
2) ....
3) ....
4) ....
Tie Breaker I would most like to see ....
....
written out, because ....
....
.... **(twenty words max)**
Name..
Address ....
....

Send to: Dirty Den Competition, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AV.

FRANK BRUNO'S BOXING

COMMODORE C16 and Plus/4
ELITE
Price: £7.95/cass

Frank Bruno's Boxing takes its inspiration from Super Puncher — the coin-op boxing game that was popular in the arcades and converted to the 64 last Summer. Now its your turn.

In the game Frank takes on three different opponents with hilarious sounding names. There's the lumbering Canadian Crusher, Fling Long Chop the crafty oriental, and the toughest opponent of all — the big, bald Russian — Andrapuncheredov.

Each opponent has his own unique style. Fling Long, for example has a tendency to think he's appearing in a copy of *Way of the Exploding Fist* rather than a boxing game — levelling Kung Fu kicks at you as he comes off the ropes.

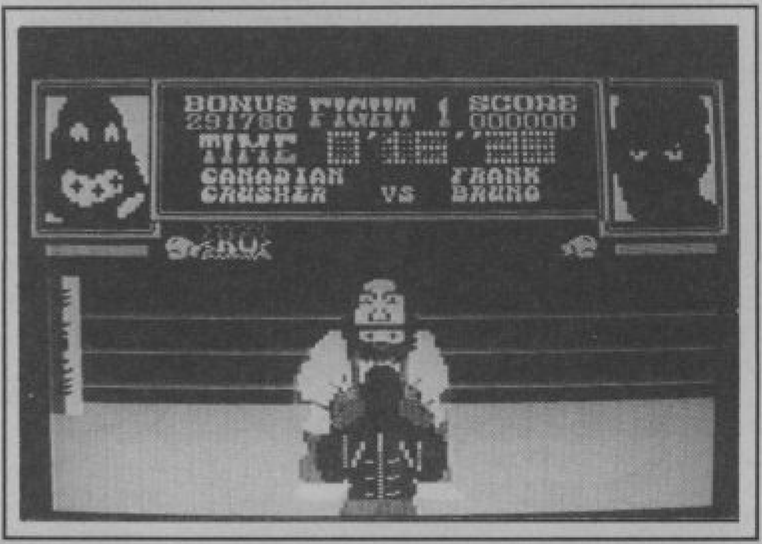
He's also the quickest boxer Frank has to face — putting together several machine gun combination punches that can leave the European champion reeling or worse still — out for the count.

The game is about the first I've come across that puts the suction pads on my joystick to good use.

You control Frank by using the stick and keys 1 and 2 — the stick to faint Frank, right and left, and the 1 and 2 keys to control his fists. It really does work well — I can't think why it's never been done before.

The Canadian Crusher is your first opponent — and no easy one either. He's got a hell of a punch on him. A real knockout merchant though not particularly mobile which enables you to avoid a lot of what he throws at you in his slow, awkward fashion.

Canadian Crusher — knock him down and he's back with a vengeance.



In terms of weight the Crusher is your largest opponent. A big, ugly, hairy heavyweight in a leotard.

If you can give him the KO treatment your next opponent will be Fling Long Chop the Chinaman. He's a sight more good looking than the Crusher in his neat white karate pants and black belt.

Graphics are of a high standard. Good use of colour, and detail in the boxers faces and clothing.

The final opponent for example, the Russian Andrapuncheredov has a neat ginger moustache with white shorts and boots. He's completely bald and likes to use his head illegally — butting our Frank when ever he gets the chance.

The Russian is the toughest of Frank's opponents and the one he faces last of all. He's very mobile. Fainting and dodging to avoid Frank's punches.

The screen display shows a portrait of Frank in the top right corner of the screen with his current opponent in the left. Again, the

JET SET WILLY

COMMODORE C16 and Plus/4
TYNESOFT
Price: £7.95/cass

Jet Set Willy, the game all us C16 and Plus/4 owners have been waiting for, with excitement and anticipation. Will such a complex game like this fit into a much smaller machine? The answer is simply NO. Well certainly not the way Tynesoft have attempted to do it.

You play the role of Manic Miner who has now become rich and famous. Joined the Dynasty set, so to speak, Champagne coming out of his ears etc. And like all Jet Setters, throws a party in his cliff top mansion.

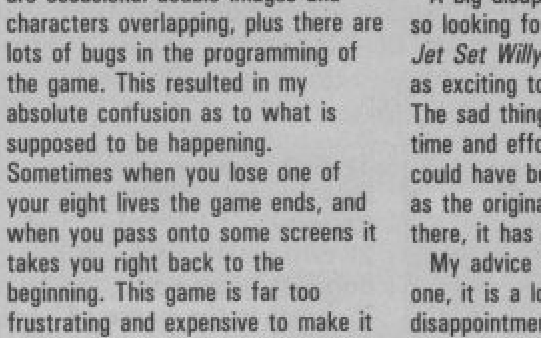
Before he can get to his room, his maid Maria makes him collect all the empty glasses placed in various rooms of the mansion. It sounds pretty easy and uncomplicated, but like all good mansions, there are endless rooms, each with their own little nasty.

During the conversion of this 64 classic, some drastic measures have been taken to squeeze the game into 16K memory. For a start the sound is even worse than its predecessor *Manic Miner*. There is only one sound throughout the entire game, and that is when you collect an item.

I do wish programmers would be a little more inventive in this direction. Even when you die all you get is a quick flash of the border, a very poor attempt to catch your attention. An unworthy effort by Tynesoft given the C16 and Plus/4 sound capabilities.

Another major disappointment about this game is the actual playability. Movement is so bad I ended up playing the game on the keyboard. For some strange reason Tynesoft have scrapped the idea of having 'fire' to jump and opted for 'up' to jump. Consequently when you want to run and jump you have to wrench the joystick into the top diagonals, making the game that much harder to play.

Also when Miner Willy moves there are occasional double images and characters overlapping, plus there are lots of bugs in the programming of the game. This resulted in my absolute confusion as to what is supposed to be happening. Sometimes when you lose one of your eight lives the game ends, and when you pass onto some screens it takes you right back to the beginning. This game is far too frustrating and expensive to make it worth playing.



Miner Willy becomes a little arthritic with his move to the C16.

A big disappointment to me, I was so looking forward to the release of *Jet Set Willy*, and hoped it would be as exciting to play as *Manic Miner*. The sad thing is that with a bit more time and effort spent, this game could have been as much a success as the original, the potential is all there, it has just been wasted.

My advice is steer clear of this one, it is a lot of money to pay for disappointment.

James Pickering

	Rating (1–10)
Graphics	8
Sound	1
Toughness	8
Endurance	5
Value	3

4 Overall

graphics here impress. Not quite up to the standard of some of the digitised portraits that are beginning to appear on some new 64 games but certainly better than anything else I've seen on the C16.

The size of the figures is also worth remarking on. They are nice and big so you can see what's going on — pretty essential to any beat 'em up game.

The main part of the screen is the ringside view itself. A slightly disappointing aspect of the game is that only a fraction of the ring is used. Bruno and his opponents face each other square on only fainting to the right and left for the duration of the round.

Above the ring are several other game displays. The digital clock counting down the three minutes of each round. Each bout only lasts for one round.

Each boxer's current strength is displayed by a constantly changing barometer. When Frank successfully pummels his opponents their strength barometer will shrink to nothing allowing him to go in for the knock out punch.

Depending on his own strength at the time his opponent may or may not stay down for the count of ten.

If not it's who scores most points, also recorded for you at the top of the screen, that is the winner.

When you get a sufficiently high victory over your opponent the computer will give you a secret code that you can use to load the next boxer. There are three separate loads in the game.

The game has been programmed to a high standard by Berks trilogy programmer — Jon Williams. It's a lesson to all those C16 programmers out there who keep delivering poorly constructed platform games, but I can't help feeling it is a little repetitive.

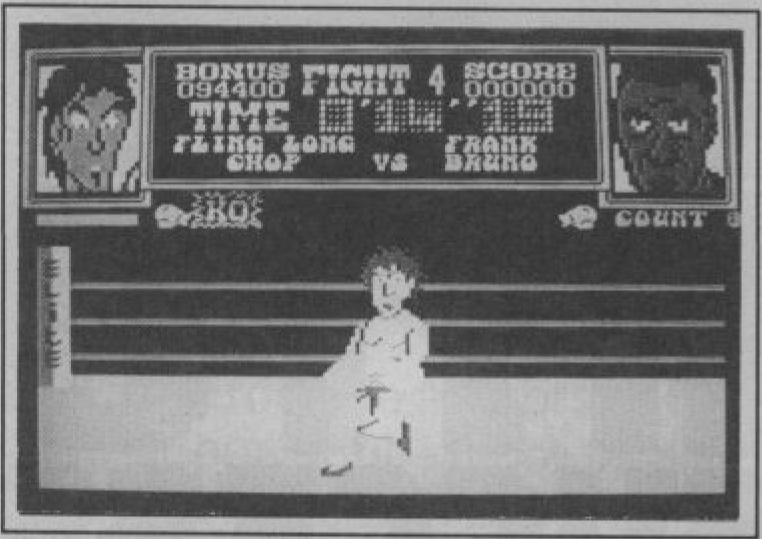
It would have been improved if Elite had crammed a few more opponents in there for a bit of variety. The 64 version had six — it ought to have been possible to get a couple more loads at least on two sides of tape.

The sound was also less than spectacular. All you really get are the bleeps for the count and some rather muffled noises as the punches are thrown.

Still, if you ever got to play *Super Puncher* in the arcades and you liked it, then this is the nearest thing to it you are ever likely to find for your C16 and Plus/4.

Eugene Lacey

Fling Long Chop waits for his post-fight Harry Carpenter interview.



Rating	Score (1–10)
Graphics	7
Sound	4
Toughness	7
Endurance	3
Value	6
Overall	**7**

RETURN OF THE SPACE WARRIOR

COMMODORE 64/128
ALPHA-OMEGA-SOFTWARE
Price: £1.99/cass

'It had to be a nightmare', begins the blurb. It was, there were no instructions and it took me at least half an hour to work out the basics.

Return of the Space Warrior (you never do get to find out where he's been) is a pretty weird game, once you find out how it actually works.

The intro screen tells you the number of players — one, the skill level — one, and that you are playing with the keyboard. The only problem is there doesn't seem to be any easy way to alter these settings. There surely exists a two player option, higher skill levels and a joystick option, how you get them is anybody's guess.

There is, however, one clue provided at this stage — Press A to start. Having done this you are presented with the screen, half a dozen little platforms. The next ten minutes are spent trying every combination of keys on the 64's keyboard. Before long, you will discover that the only keys required are A — to propel you into the air, L to go left and one of the square brackets to go right.

Accompanied by some great sound, your craft emerges on one of the platforms. Your ship is of an advanced design type known as an ovulasphere. To the inexperienced layman, it looks very much like an egg on a surfboard, but is, in fact, a very sophisticated piece of machinery. Before you know where you are, enemy ovulaspheres are turning up all over the place. This is where the extremely advanced weaponry of the 21st Century comes in handy (it doesn't actually say the game is set in the 21st Century, but judging by the advanced technology on show it must be). Expertly manipulating your gravity smash you must dispose of the enemy ovulaspheres.

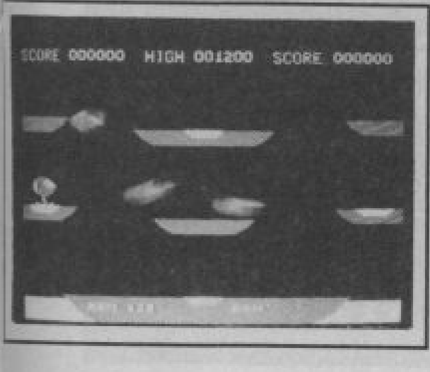
In practice, this involves manipulating your craft above the enemy and then smacking into it. As luck would have it, more often than not you end up below them just prior to impact and you are the one to lose out.

That's about it really. When you destroy the ovulaspheres they turn into what I can only describe as square blobs, which you must pick up for bonus points, before they turn back into surfing eggs. When a screen is cleared it's on to the next wave.

Like I said, a weird game. *Space Warrior* has some nice ideas, but I get the impression maybe it's a rushed, super low budget job. Apart from the Minteresque sound effects, there's nothing spectacular about it. A good idea let down a little bit by the presentation.

Ken McMahon

The space warrior looks suspiciously like an egg on a surfboard!



Rating	Score (1–10)
Graphics	3
Sound	4
Toughness	3
Endurance	2
Value	3
Overall	**3**

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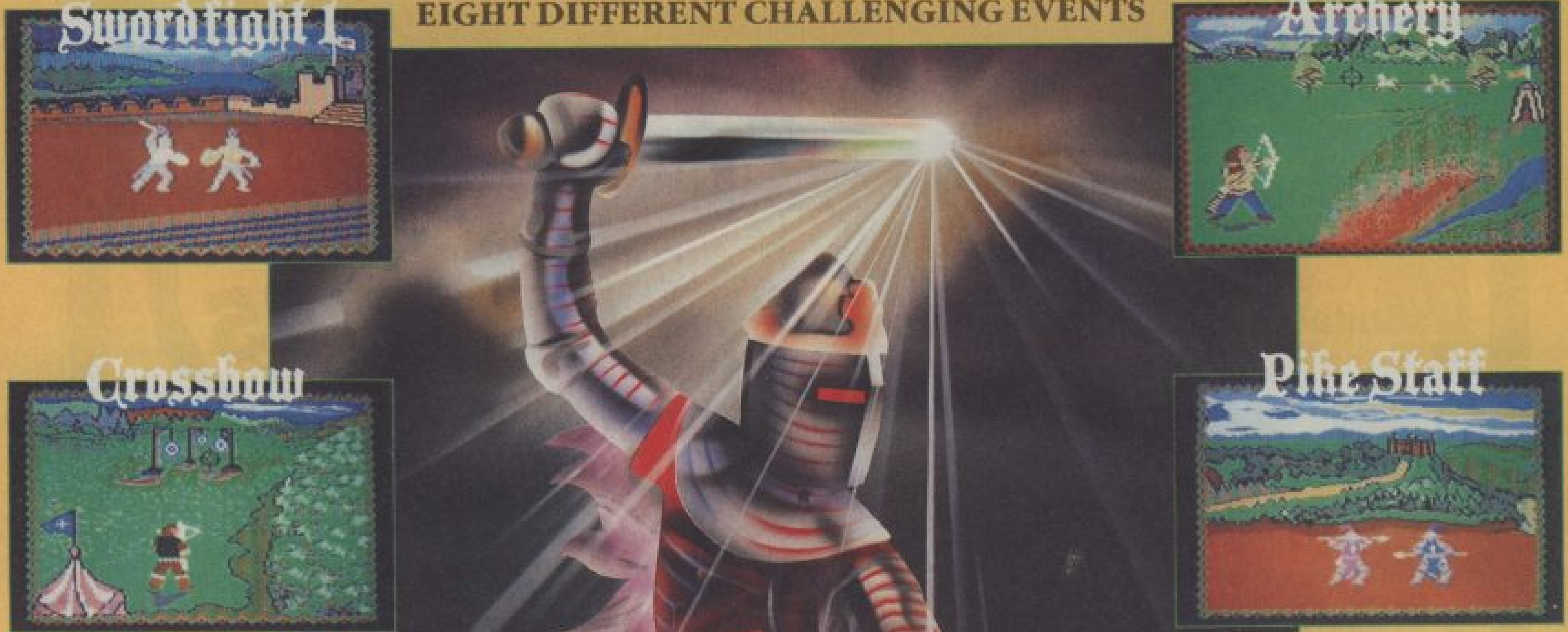
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Karen Mitcham may have trouble taking her great prize home — it's bigger than she is. Lucky Karen won the complete Commodore 64 Music System in a draw organised with its makers, Music Sales, at the Commodore User stand at the recent Commodore Show. Deputy Ed Bohdan Buciak *(proving very photogenic this month — Ed)* shows off the runners-up prize — a pair of false teeth.



COMPETITION WINNERS

Synth Competition Winner

Judging by the response to the Synth competition, you're all pretty keen to get your hands on a Complete Music System. Most of you got the answers right (Robert Moog, Soft Cell, Commando) but got no points by insulting some of our favourite musicians — Howard Jones, Barry Manilow, Richard Clayderman and, er, Klaus Wunderlich.

The winner, Dave Howells of Bristol, managed to insult most of those, and suggested he might get Les Dawson and Sooty to form a band if he could get hold of a Complete Music System. So Dave, we expect to hear about Sooty and Les's Blue Funk Railroad Express All Star Glove Puppet Commodore Complete Dawson Music System Squeak Squeak Band pretty soon.

Berks Competition Winners

We're all slumped back in our chairs suffering from nervous exhaustion, having picked the Berks compo winners from our mega-mailbag.

First prize of a **Tomy Verbot** goes to Paul Welch from Exeter who brought us out of our coma with, "When a robot you've never met before suddenly grabs you by the throat — that's IMPULSE!". Alas, only 22 other attempts made us even think about laughing — copies of the Berks game to you all:

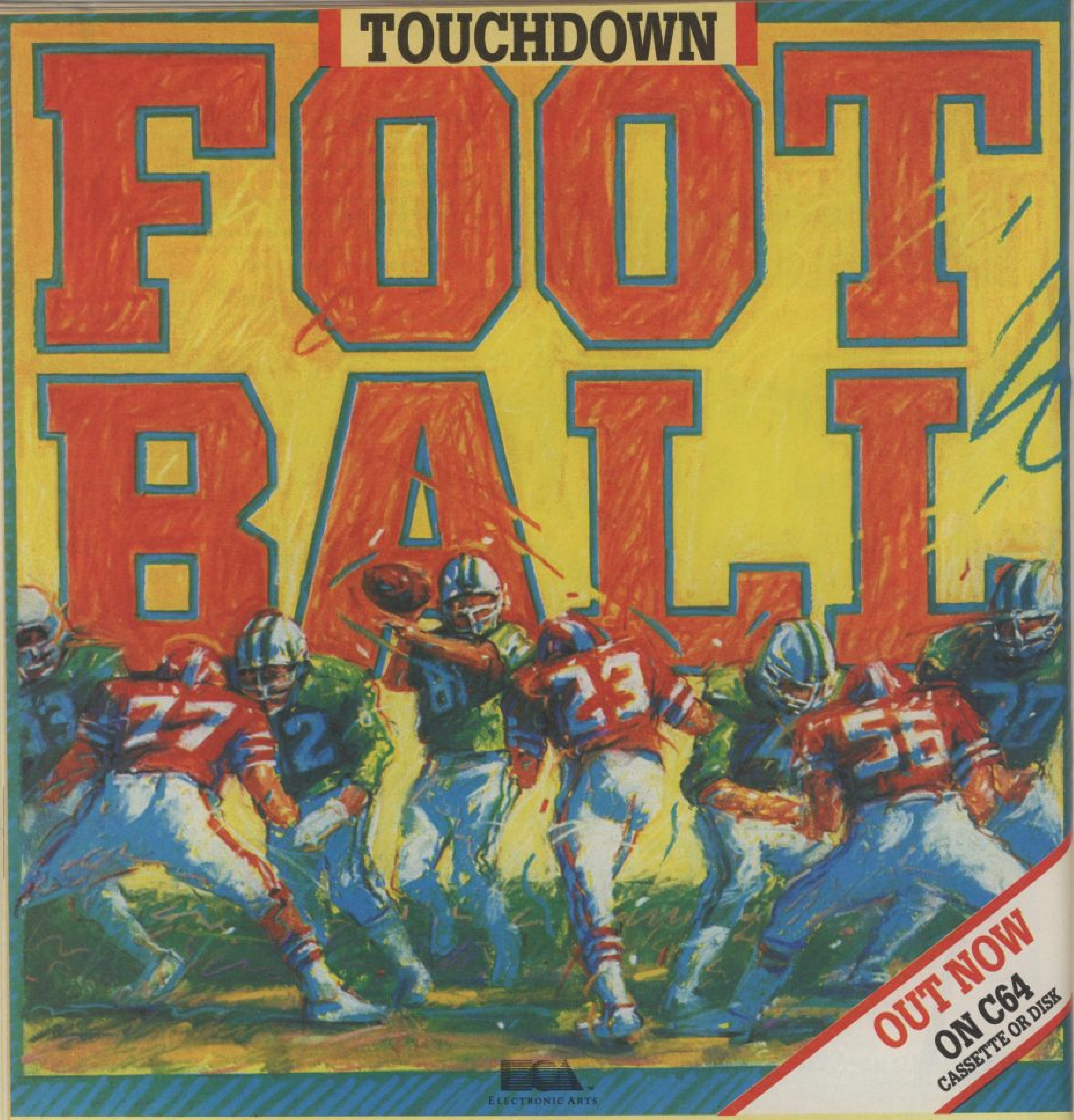
Nicholas Klee of Kent; Christopher Grice of Burton-on-Trent, S. Reeves of Birmingham; John Paul Ahern of County Cork; Andrew Swallow of Sheffield; Andrew Gould of Essex; Paul Heusser of Birmingham; Colm Kielthy of Co. Wexford; Andrew Scott of Manchester; Steve Fletcher of Manchester; Patrick Kennelly of Herts; John Glibbery of Kent; Ra-ey Saleh of Salford; Nicholas Smith of Derbys; Robert Lucas of Surrey; C. Palmer of Canterbury; Mark Schulz of Jarrow; Gavin Sim of Preston; Saboor Abdul of Cleveland; T. Pefers of Pinner; S. Brehaut of Hants, and M. Bartlett of Pontypool.

Green Beret Results

The response to our *Green Beret* competition was, unsurprisingly, enormous. Clearly the idea of having an arcade machine of your very own appealed to you as much as it did to us. The problem was that the questions we set proved to be a bit of a stumbling block for many of you. The correct answers were 1) Konami has no meaning 2) World Series Baseball was not a Konami title and 3) Konami's first release was the Block Game.

Right you'd better sit down Paul Miller of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, you've won a Green Beret coin op all to yourself! Wow, can we come round and play? Your suggestion for a 64 game to be converted into an arcade machine was Bounder and we agreed it was perfect.

There were thirty runners-up, so screw your eyes up and check to see if you've won a copy of the 64 conversion: *Matthew Clayton, Otley, N. Yorks; Ian Abbot, Dunstable, Beds; Russell Higgs, Chasetown, Walsall; Perry Stevenson, Bournemouth, Dorset; Brett White, Croydon, Surrey; Lee Shipley, Huyton, Liverpool; Stephen Jenkins, Ammanford, Dyfed; Karl Gore, Highfield, Wigan; Andrew Waterhouse, Porthcawl, Mid-Glamorgan; Ian Lee, Maghull, Merseyside; Stephen Hewett, Acton, London; Tony Clough, Grantham, Lincs; Tim Barker, Abingdon, Oxon; Jason Pulfer, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk; Andrew Tate, Dublane, Perthshire; Julian Dyball, Gt Garmouth, Norfolk; Matthew Clayton, Otley, N. Yorks; Russell Barker, Green Lane, Morpeth; David Watt, Polesworth, Staffs; Simon Gibson, Jesmond, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Ian Folan, Stepney, London; Michael O'Donell, Blackrock, Eire; Glen White, Woking, Surrey; Jamie Wooder, Borehamwood, Herts; Neil Golding, Druids Heath, Birmingham; Gavin Douglas Sinclair, Powmill; Stephen Dalton, Ripon, N. Yorks; Rajesh Gill, Ilford, Essex; Gregor Burroughs, Glasgow; Spencer Bernstein, Redditch, Worcs; Graham Ruston, Hodge Hill, Birmingham.*



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COMMODORE 64 CHART

NEW	Thrust	Firebird
NEW	International Karate	System 3
NEW	Spindizzy	Electric Dreams
NEW	PS1-5 Trading Company	U.S. Gold
NEW	Spellbound	Mastertronic
NEW	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
7	Bombjack	Elite
NEW	They Sold (2)	Hit Squad
9	Uridium	Hewson Consultants
NEW	Off the Hook	Off the Hook
11	Kane	Mastertronic
12	V	Ocean
NEW	World Cup Carnival	U.S. Gold
14	Superbowl	Ocean
NEW	Wing Commander	Mastertronic
NEW	Golf Construction Set	Ariolasoft
17	Hardball	U.S. Gold
18	Zapp Sizzlers	Gremlin Graphics
NEW	Biggles	Mirrorsoft
NEW	Countdown to Meltdown	Mastertronic

CHART CHAT

The major shock in the charts this month is the position of Thrust. Our ex Cheapo of the Month is sitting proudly on top of the rest. This suggests that the gameplay and addictiveness of full price games is just not up to standard. Well done Firebird. Elsewhere *International Karate* is doing well, proving that you don't have to be original or even on time to do well in this business. Otherwise it's business as usual with *Uridium* the biggest seller so far this year being toppled and *Spindizzy* makes a strong challenge for the number one slot. The only thing that can stop it reaching the top is the big arcade challenge of *Green Beret* and *Ghosts and Goblins.* Over on the C16 chart it's Mastertronic all the way as budget games hold sway. Is the quality of games so poor here that no-one's willing to shell out more than a few quid?

GENERAL

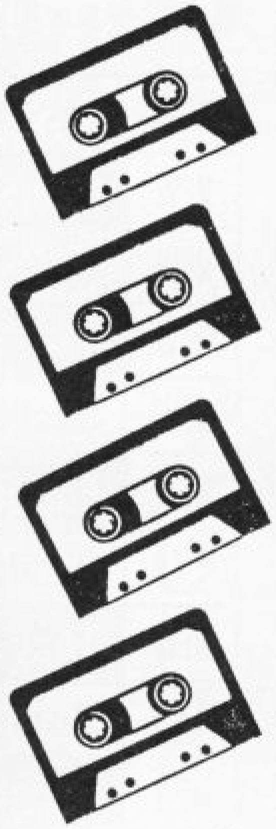
NEW	Thrust	Firebird
NEW	Batman	Ocean
3	Commando	Elite
4	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
NEW	Spindizzy	Electric Dreams
NEW	Kik Start	Mastertronic
7	Bombjack	Elite
NEW	They Sold (2)	Hit Squad
9	International Karate	System 3
10	Spellbound	Mastertronic

C16

GALLUP

NEW	Kik Start	Mastertronic
2	Mr. Puniverse	Mastertronic
3	Bandits at Zero	Mastertronic
NEW	Hektik	Mastertronic
NEW	Return of Rockman	Mastertronic
6	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
7	Big Mac	Mastertronic
8	Rockman	Mastertronic
9	BMX Racers	Mastertronic
10	Commando	Elite





The Games

We'll lay money that you own at least one of his games and that'll you'll probably buy another fairly soon. He owns a quarter of the European games market, drives a Ferrari and buys Italian clothes. Who is he? Eugene Lacey swallowed his pride and drove his works Cavalier up to Birmingham to meet him and find out more about the Games Man ...

Through his own company U.S. Gold and through deals with several other software houses around the world Geoff Brown has sold over 2 million computer games in the three years his company has been running and confidently expects to sell over another million this year.

Just a little investigation reveals that Ocean, Ultimate, English Software, Adventure International, Gremlin Graphics, Microprose, Epyx, Access, Datasoft, S.S.I., Accolade, Sierra On-Line, and Sydney Development are all — in one way or another linked with U.S. Gold.

Add to these interests a brand new budget label called Americana, Europe's biggest distributor of computer games — Centresoft, and you can begin to understand how the Games Man can drive around in one of only 20 Ferrari Testarossa's in the U.K.

As soon as Geoff Brown opens his mouth you can understand why the phrase "nice guy" keeps coming up whenever you talk to anyone who knows him. It's that voice — with a slight touch of Brummie, but soft — like a sort of laid back Adrian Mole. The clothes are pretty good too. Designer casuals. The 'I'm-not-really-a-hard-nosed-businessman' look.

But that impression does not last when you take in the atmosphere of his office.

You can almost hear the cash tills ringing at U.S. Gold's modest H.Q. in a modern industrial estate, a five minute taxi ride from Brum's Bull Ring.

The rooms above the warehouse are crammed with people. Desks practically on top of each other. It's all very business-like in the place with phones ringing, memos being fetched and carried, and business people coming and going and shaking hands as they disappear in and out of doors.

The brand new Ferrari sits outside the offices in clear view of the receptionist with the financial controller's Porsche keeping it company.

Of course flash cars are nothing new to the software industry. The last couple of Personal Computer World Shows would have looked more like the Expensive Cars of The Year Show if you happened to wander, by accident, into the car park next door to the event.

What makes Geoff Brown's car different is that he forked out the sixty two grand to buy his — rather than renting it, like most of the other games business tycoons seeking to boost their image.

So is the Games Man a millionaire?

"No ... the strict definition is that you have to have a million pounds in your bank. I don't have a million in the bank but if you were to add up the value of my companies I suppose you could say that I was a millionaire".

Either way you look at it it's not bad going for a former maths teacher, and failed rock musician who started his company with a £200 loan from Nat West.

Music Man

Geoff Brown is one of those rich people who would have you believe that their new-found wealth has not changed them one bit.

"When I was a musician I was living on the breadline but I was perfectly happy. Like so many bands we were always on the verge of just making it."

Geoff played keyboards for a group called Muscles, which owed more to the emerging electronic bands of the late seventies than the heavy metal its name implies.

Brown was in good company in Muscles for another member of the band has easily equalled his personal wealth — now the drummer for Simple Minds — Jim Gaynor.

After trying to make it in the music biz and failing, Geoff Brown decided to try something new and bought himself

Man

a computer. "An Atari 800. I've just finished paying for it".

"In the end I decided that I would rather be a never was, than a has been".

The decision to give up music and try something else was a tough one and one that he has still not given up on entirely.

"One of my ambitions is to have a number one record".

"I've had several hits with our games — and each time U.S. Gold gets one it still gives me a thrill — but having had several number 1's in the games charts, it would be really nice to do it in the pop charts too".

"I'm a bit too old to do it myself now, though", he admits generously, considering his trendy appearance.

"What I'd like to do is compose something for a new band, select the musicians and publish the record myself. So I could still feel part of it".

This is no idle wish either. Brown has converted a room in his house into a studio and souped up his 64 with a Midi Interface and all the latest musical add-ons.

The rags to riches attitudes of the music business have not entirely faded into Geoff Brown's past.

"When I was writing songs for Muscles I used to stare at the keyboard and think somewhere in there is a million pounds. It was the same when I got the Atari. I knew it had the power to make a lot of money".

How it all began

Brown talks affectionately about his Atari and well he might for it was the foundation stone of his business.

He moved quickly to tie up exclusive importerships with several leading American games producers who — in pre-64 days — put most of their efforts into Atari games. At that time the U.K. software houses were concentrating on the Spectrum and Vic.

The 64 explosion changed everything. The American game makers switched to Commodore games as a priority and Brown was perfectly placed to emerge as the number one U.K. source of 64 games.

It was to be a long time before the home producers of 64 games could match the quality of the American software, and Brown believes they still haven't matched it. "Take something like *Winter Games*. That would never have been written in the U.K. *Winter Games* has several loads. It relies on being able to read much more data off the disk at different times for different parts of the game ... When the program has to be entirely resident in the 64 (as cassette-based games do) then the designer has to work within that set limit of memory".

The limitations of cassette-based software are something Brown knows well because the first question he has to address when importing a new game is: will it work on cassette? Some do and some don't and some don't even get attempted.

For this reason he is not impressed by the wave of euphoria sweeping U.K. games houses that this is the year they take the States. "Tell me one U.K. game that has made it to number one in the States", Brown asks accusingly. Though the success of *Elite* in doing just that subsequent to this interview may force him to reconsider his judgment.

What's coming

But if licensing hot American games and flogging them across a range of European systems was the name of the game for the last couple of years then that is definitely not the case for the rest of '86 and beyond.

U.S. Gold have now gone one better. They have commissioned some of the top American games writers to work on titles that will see the light of day in Europe first.

One such programmer is Chris Gray — famous for *Boulderdash*. He is just putting the finishing touches to *Infiltrator* — a multi challenge rescue game. Catch the full story on this one in next month's CU.

Probably the biggest launch of the year from the U.S. Gold stable will be *Gauntlet* — the four player arcade adventure that is currently gobbling ten pence pieces faster than any other arcade game in the country.

Its not surprising this one is doing so well. The Atari coin-op enables four players to play together simultaneously, against each other, with four separate joysticks on the cabinet.

Shoot 'em up fans are also included in the planning with the licensing of *Xevious* — another Atari coin-op — a shoot 'em up that promises to make *Uridium* look like Space Invaders.

U.S. Gold have already woken up to the revival of the coin-op conversion. They stole the number one spot in the charts in March with *Kung Fu Master* — one of the top selling games of '86.

One thing you won't see from U.S. Gold in the near future are Amiga and Atari ST games.

Brown is less than optimistic about these machines' chances of success. "The Amiga has failed and the ST is hardly setting the world alight".

Getting bigger all the time

The planned expansion of U.S. Gold in '86 will necessitate a move to bigger premises — a large office block near the awful Bull Ring.

Before the planned expansion U.S. Gold already controlled 25% of the European games market. That's damn near a monopoly situation in business terms.

Does Geoff Brown think this is in the games players interest? "I've published dozens and played every one of them before we made the decision to go ahead. Basically I think I know a good game when I see one".

It would be difficult to argue with that but is it still possible for the home programmer to make some money out of a game of his or her own, and what would convince Geoff to publish it?

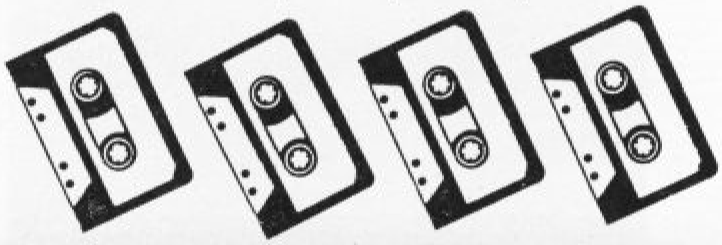
"I would want to get a feeling for the game and for the person. I would want to feel confident that the programmer understood why anyone would want to play the game. Does he or she have an all over picture about how it could work?" I would also look for an idea or two about how it should be advertised and promoted ... "

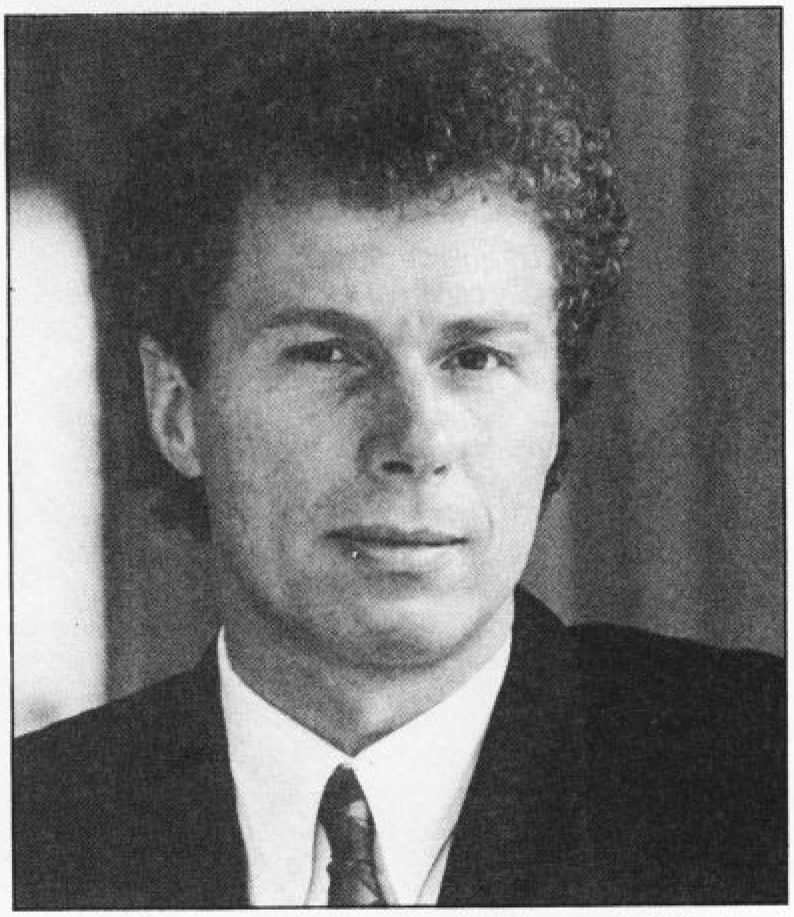
Outside of programming wizards does the Games Man have any general advice on how *Commodore User* readers can become millionaires and drive around in shiny new Ferraris?

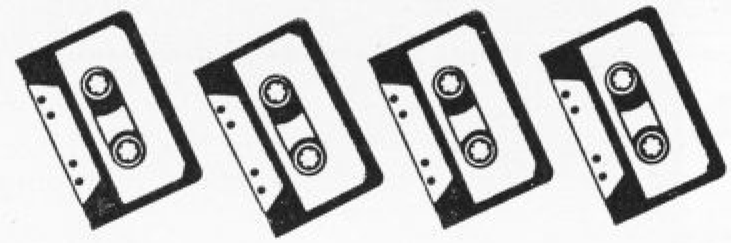
"Just be prepared to work" ... "I am in the office at eight o'clock, six days a week and I rarely leave before eight in the evening."

But when do you get to drive the Ferrari? "At weekends mostly, though I did take it up to 160mph in France recently".

No, the police didn't catch him — even though a helicopter was scrambled to give chase. But that's Games Man for you — one step ahead. □







INTO THE VALLEY

by Keith Campbell

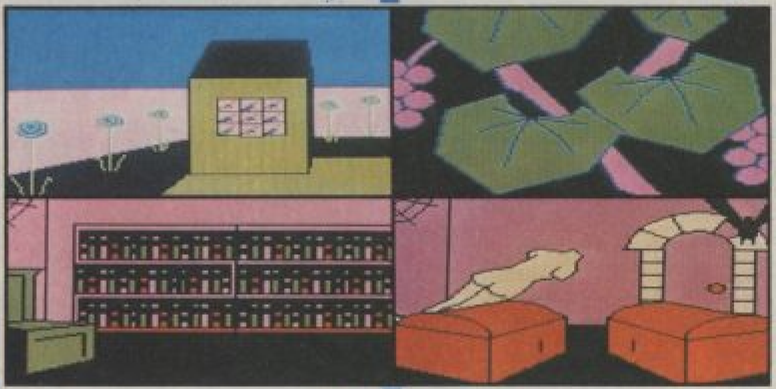
THE PRICE OF MAGIK

Level 9
GrA

CBM 64/128
Price: £9.95/cass

This is the wood shed. Search it carefully and watch out for the nasty.

The vines — this is the route to the roof.

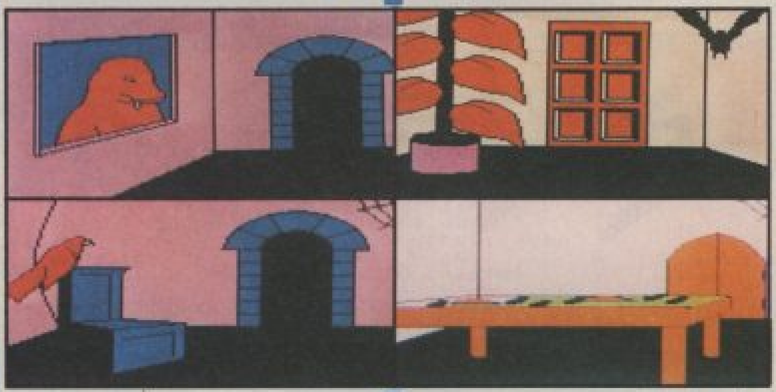


The Library stuffed full of books on how to cook Hobbit's.

Open the wrong one for a nasty surprise.

Magic pictures location.

Get that bat.

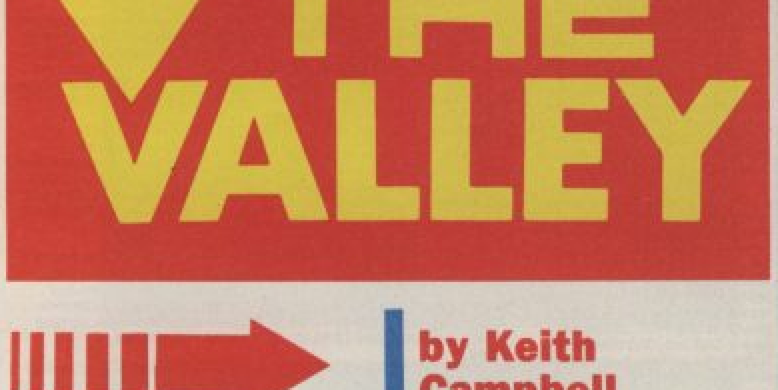


Where are you now?

Waken the board game to learn a new spell.

Marble madness?

Those hanging tentacles can be deadly.



These plants are useful for magical protection.

Stone Henge, and not a hippy in sight.

Level 9 have done it again. But then they always do! Not only have they produced another superb adventure, they have incorporated all the new goodies that are beginning to appear in adventures, plus more besides!

Price of Magik is the sequel to *Red Moon*, and shows off the Austins' latest and greatest parser. With a thousand word vocabulary behind it, there's all the features you might find on an Infocom game — and on cassette! Multiple commands, GET ALL, EXAMINE ALL BUT, and IT, are all supported, as well as conversation with characters in the game.

Magically bring the pictures to life and see what happens.

Also included is a RAM SAVE option, but best of all, is an entirely new OOPS (or 'undo') command, which takes you safely back to your last location.

Your task is to displace Myglar, before he sucks all the power from the magic crystal of which he is Guardian. Fail, and very soon there will be no magik left in the world.

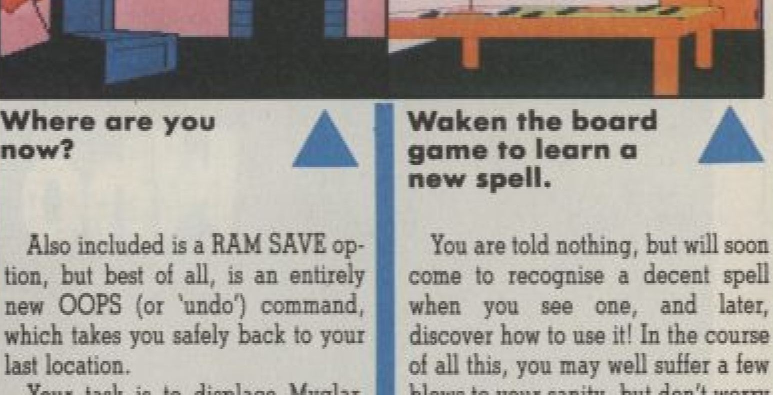
Naturally, to get the better of so fearsome a magician, you'll need to use a bit of magik yourself. Unless you happen to know some, you'll have to learn — and fast.

You are told nothing, but will soon come to recognise a decent spell when you see one, and later, discover how to use it! In the course of all this, you may well suffer a few blows to your sanity, but don't worry — the less sane you are, the better a magician you become!

Magik alone will not see you through though, you'll also need to brush up on your fighting techniques. There are ghoulies and ghosties, and all sorts of other very nasty creatures lurking in the house of the Red Moon. Some attack you on

Hang 'em high.

The Hall of Statues — one of hundreds of pretty pictures in the *Price of Magik*.



sight. Others simply refuse to let you pass by. Combat is carried out in text mode, and reports on your strength points are displayed regularly whilst you're fighting.

As well as magik and combat, there are, of course, plenty of puzzles! And here I found the new features incorporated in the game make it very slick to play. Confronted by a collection of chests, it soon became apparent that danger was lurking inside many of them. By a combination of RAM SAVEs and OOPSes, all the tedium of tape saving and loading was removed, allowing the situation to be sorted out rapidly and methodically.

Hitherto, Level 9 adventures have been identical on every one of the wide range of micros for which the games are produced. In order to make full use of the increasing memory of the average computer, slightly cut down text and reduced 'extras', are provided on smaller machines. But the 64 is up there near the top of the list, only marginally smaller than the MSX.

This is the first Level 9 product to be provided with the expensive Lenslok protection system.

Price of Magik is the second adventure to be produced at 'Level 9 West', the home of Pete, Nick and Mike Austin. Set on a hillside overlooking a peaceful valley, it's obviously proving an ideal retreat in which to create their special brand of magic. There are also views of Weston Super Mare, ". . . home town of comedians John Cleese and Jeffrey Archer . . ." says the inlay.

Anyway, as with all Level 9 games, one can only say, "Their best yet!"

Graphics	★★★
Playability	★★★★★
Puzzleability	★★★★
Overall	★★★★★





You'll need to find a coin to get in.

Oh no, it's engaged, and you're dying to go.

THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE

CRL/St. Bride's
GrA
CBM 64
Price: £7.95/cass

The Very Big Cave Adventure claims to be the original *Original Adventure* which was subsequently cleaned up to become the Crowther and Wood Original Adventure — *Colossal Cave*. Your guided tour through this unexpected labyrinth, is conducted by no less an authority on dark alcoves and tight squeezes, than Trixie Trinian, prefect at St. Bride's School.

So you thought the little brick house in the forest was a well house, source of the stream along whose banks lay hidden a locked grating? You got it wrong! Had you looked closely at the door while playing one of the many derivatives of Colossal Cave, you would have noticed a little brass coin-operated mechanism, bearing the legend VACANT.



Once inside, do your business and look for something useful. (In the loo? Ed.)

The brick wit-house contains familiar objects, and a few surprises, including a dry spring, and a pair of wellies. Off down the stream, underground, and along a well-known crawl westwards — did you remember the lamp? It is dark, and without it you might fall down a sploosh hole. Here, the walls are made of frozen orange sorbet, and the resident recognition-seeking songbird will be awaiting you. A canny bird, he will easily recognise an old hand, by the lack of a black rod in his inventory. After all, an adventurer is an inveterate hoarder, and will greedily pick up everything in sight, until he can carry no more.

Along this stretch of cave, beware a ginger-headed spindly creature wearing a beard and glasses — he may well throw something deadly at you! Further along the serpent has become a python — but how will you persuade it to join that great flying circus in the sky?

The puzzles all have a new and satirical twist, cleverly built into the very reasonable framework of Colossal Cave. To appreciate the humour to the full, you'll have to have previously played *Colossal* in one form or another. If you haven't I'd say that it's worth buying it to play, before attempting this. However, you'll still get plenty of laughs even if you haven't played *Colossal Cave*. There is the Twee Room and Habitat Room, for example, that are amusing in their own right. There is a Rude Room, too, with a VERY rude word written on the wall.

Very Big is Quilled, Patched, and Illustrated, but it doesn't play like it. It has some screen and sound effect surprises, is very fast to display, and reads well. It comes in two parts, and although a RAM save option is provided, to pass from one part to the next requires a tape save.

Here you will find old problems with a new twist, and new problems with an old twist. This is my choice as the best spoof adventure yet!

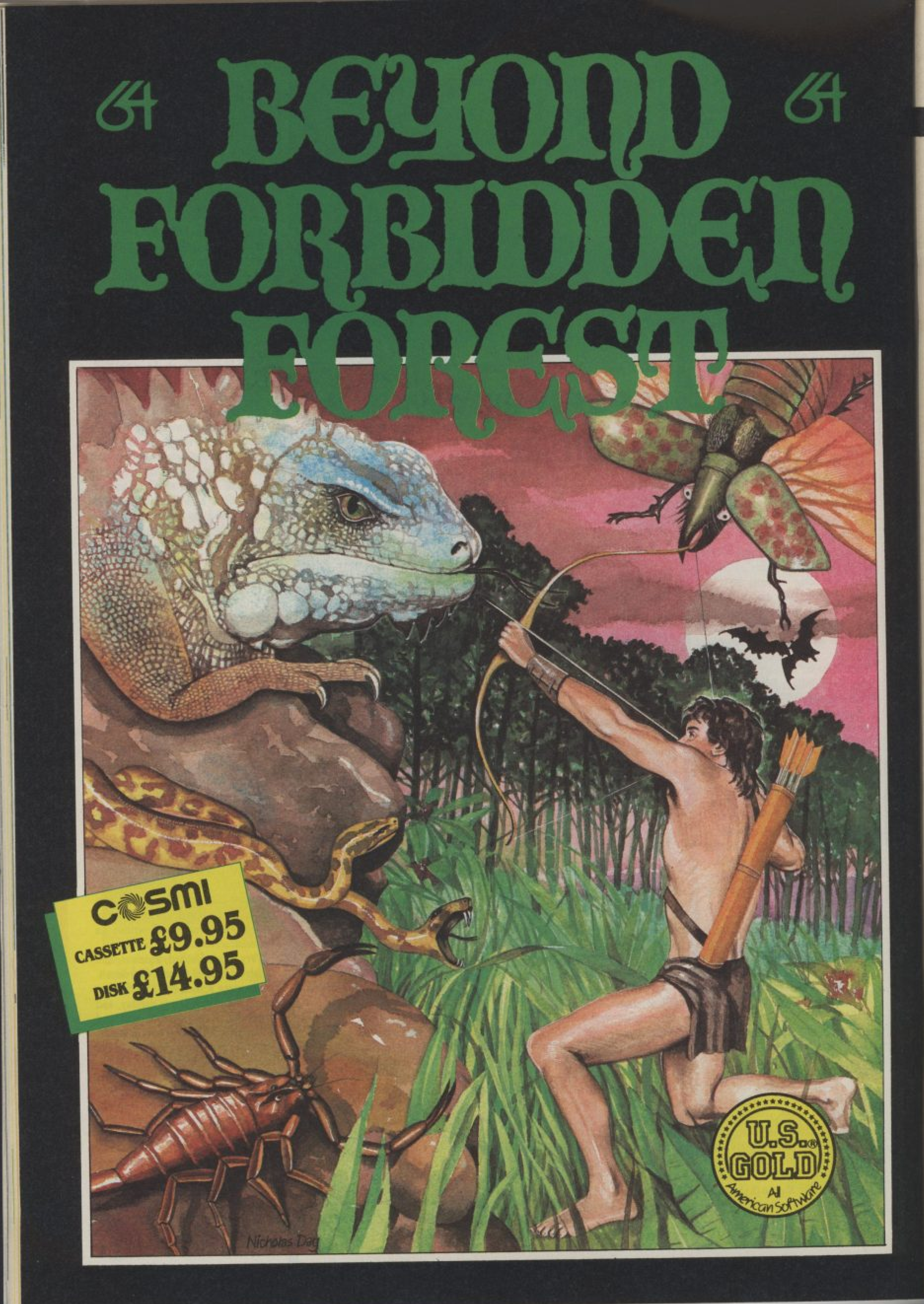
Graphics	★★★
Playability	★★★★
Puzzleability	★★★
Overall	★★★★

NEWS

Magnetic Scrolls have signed a deal with Rainbird Software under which they will release six games over the next few years. The first of these products, scheduled for an Autumn release, is a new adventure entitled *Guild of Thieves*, which is 'even better than *The Pawn*', claims Scrolls' Anita Sinclair.

Delta 4 are now back in the business of distributing their own titles, *Bored of the Rings,* and *Robin of Sherlock*, following rumours of problems at Silversoft, involving non-payment of royalties. Meanwhile, Fergus McNeil, brains behind the titles, has signed up a deal to write a new adventure for the more reliable and well-loved family firm of Level 9. Watch out, too, for Delta 4's *The Boggit*, on release from CRL.

Incentive Software have now released a version of their *Graphic Adventure Creator* on the 64, originally available for the Amstrad. This excellent package combines text and graphics utilities all in one program, uses extensive text compression, and has an easy-to-use editing system. It's priced at £22.95 on cassette, £27.95 on disk, and if the 64 version comes up to the Amstrad original, then Quilled games will soon be a thing of the past.


64 BEYOND FORBIDDEN FOREST 64
COSMI
CASSETTE £9.95
DISK £14.95
U.S. GOLD
All American Software
Nicholas Day

VALLEY HELPLINE

People have been known to go almost insane trying to unravel some of the more devious problems in Adventure games! There's the famous Screening Door and Babel Fish in *Hitch Hiker's Guide* — many a head has been turned by these! *Sorcerer of Claymorgue Castle* has its Fountain of Youth, and (apparently) too many jobs to do with too few spells.

The mind-bending puzzles are numerous. There's leviathans, iron statues, knights who say NIC, bracketless men on trains, bio-gems, immovable wristbands, and pale bulbous eyes, (not to mention iron gratings) all waiting to ensnare the innocent adventurer. And if these aren't enough to break the mind and spirit, the chances are that leprosy will, before long, strike the hardy adventurer.

We are determined to put an end to this untold misery! Welcome to the **Commodore User Adventure Helpline**, or **Valley Rescue Service**! Here's how it works.

If you are on the verge of despair put pen to person and let me know where you are stuck. I will rush you a reply, hopefully, containing the remedy to your ills. If the cure is unknown, then your problem will get a mention in these pages, calling on the combined might of Commodore User readers to help. And a Clues section each month, will aim at both prevention and cure, anticipating problems in the latest games, and offering solace to those whose pleas are answered.

I can't promise that we know all the answers, but I do think we have more at our fingertips than any other single source, thanks to the Computer & Video Games Adventure Helpline Database. The C&VG Helpline has been running for over three years, and now the power behind it is being offered to CU readers. The column in CU will be entirely separate, but all the clues you send in, will be added to the database, providing an even more powerful service to the readers of both magazines.

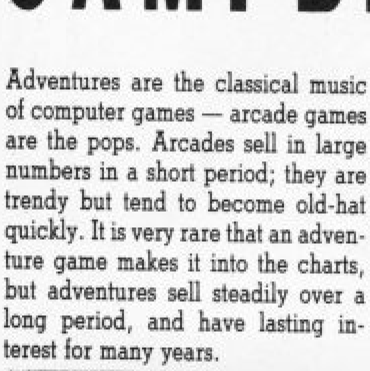
This month brings you a taster — your first few clues to be going on with!

Oh, and one more thing! Unlike any other Adventure Helpline we know of, the Helpline aims to answer all mail, be it with a clue, a 'thankyou', or a 'sorry'. We reckon we achieve a reply level of over 95%. We will be extending the same reply service to Commodore Users, on attractively designed 'Valley' postcards!

Looking forward to hearing from you!

CAMPBELL'S COMMENT

Adventures are the classical music of computer games — arcade games are the pops. Arcades sell in large numbers in a short period; they are trendy but tend to become old-hat quickly. It is very rare that an adventure game makes it into the charts, but adventures sell steadily over a long period, and have lasting interest for many years.



What, then, of the recent chart success of *Lord of the Rings?* Here is a game, which, like its predecessors *The Hobbit* and *Sherlock*, is riddled with bugs, and crashes on the slightest pretext. The Hobbit had an excuse, it was the first of a new genre of adventures, featuring colour graphics and sophisticated text input, designed to run on the first machines that brought larger memory and colour within the reach of millions.

But too much effort seems to have been put into trying to make the command interpreter more intelligent, and virtually none in making it more reliable. As a result, it frequently suffers from half-witted replies at best, nervous breakdowns at worst.

Plenty of the correspondence I receive from adventurers makes reference to recently found bugs. Do adventure players, in fact, enjoy bugs? Do they take delight in entering obscure commands to try to trip the program up, in order to discover (yet) another bug? Rather like finding another treasure, or inaccessible exit, perhaps? I suspect not. Some, I think, make the best of a bad job, others complain bitterly.

An adventure game is particularly difficult to test exhaustively, due to the multiple paths that are possible through the program. But an adventure software house that consistently produces drastically faulty programs does not deserve the respect, or continued support, of adventure players. It is saying, in effect: "It loads. It can be completed. Other than that, we can't be bothered to test it. £15.00 please."

Because these poor quality programs are backed up by quality names like Tolkien and Conan Doyle, they are hyped-up and sell enormously well. They are the first introduction to many, of the adventure game format. The trouble is, that this attitude also affects other, far more conscientious firms. Who can blame people if, once caught, they decide to stick to arcades in future?

An adventure game takes a considerably longer playing time for review purposes than does an arcade game. I must confess that I, among other reviewers, gave *Lord Of The Rings* a fairly good write up. Perhaps those of us who did are partly to blame for the game's success, not having played it exhaustively enough to discover the many shortcomings in the program. But I for one will be a lot harder on Part 2. Be warned, Melbourne — get your House in order!

CLUES

FANTASTIC FOUR:
Breathing liquid causes drowning; lack of ventilation causes suffocation. When you have hit bottom, you need to feel, to feel the need, to make a break!

VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE:
A good round of applause will flatter a singer!

SORCEROR OF CLAYMORE CASTLE:
There is a cabinet along with all the usual things . . .

EUREKA ROMAN:
A gift of clothes for a saintly cure.

REBEL PLANET:
You won't have time for the nightlife, so settle an argument with a bribe!

Address your adventure clues and problems to me at Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Mark your envelope with COMMODORE USER, so that the clue you need gets printed in the appropriate magazine!

INTO THE VALLEY

SEABASE DELTA

Firebird
GrA
CBM 64/128
Price: £1.99/cass.

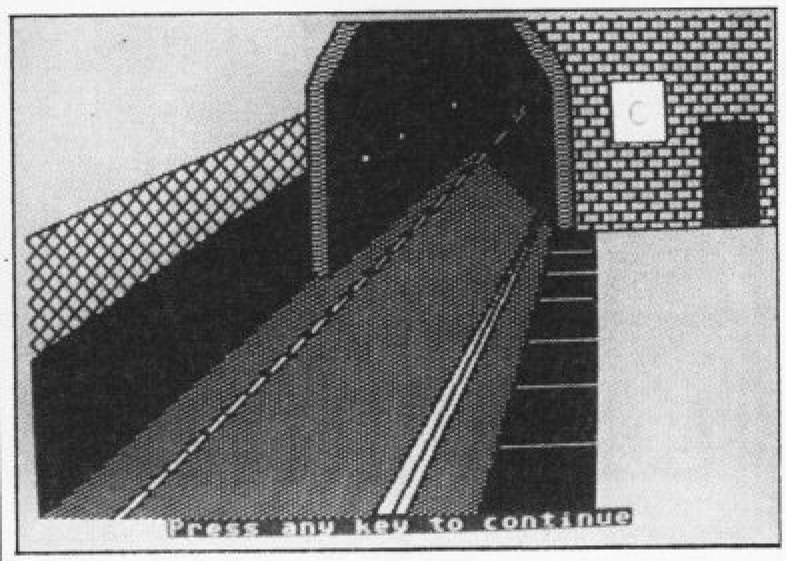
For a pocket-money priced game, you could do a lot worse than *Seabase Delta*. This is the sequel to *Subsunk*, featuring your friendly reporter Ed Lines on yet another underwater mission. You, as Ed, have achieved the objective of *Subsunk*, and sent a distress signal from the stranded submarine, only to have it dragged by a strange magnetic force into Seabase Delta.

You find yourself in the company of a corpse, and documents near the body reveal a plot to despatch a nuclear missile at a British base. Your job is to stop it, (and get a hot story back to your Editor, I should think).

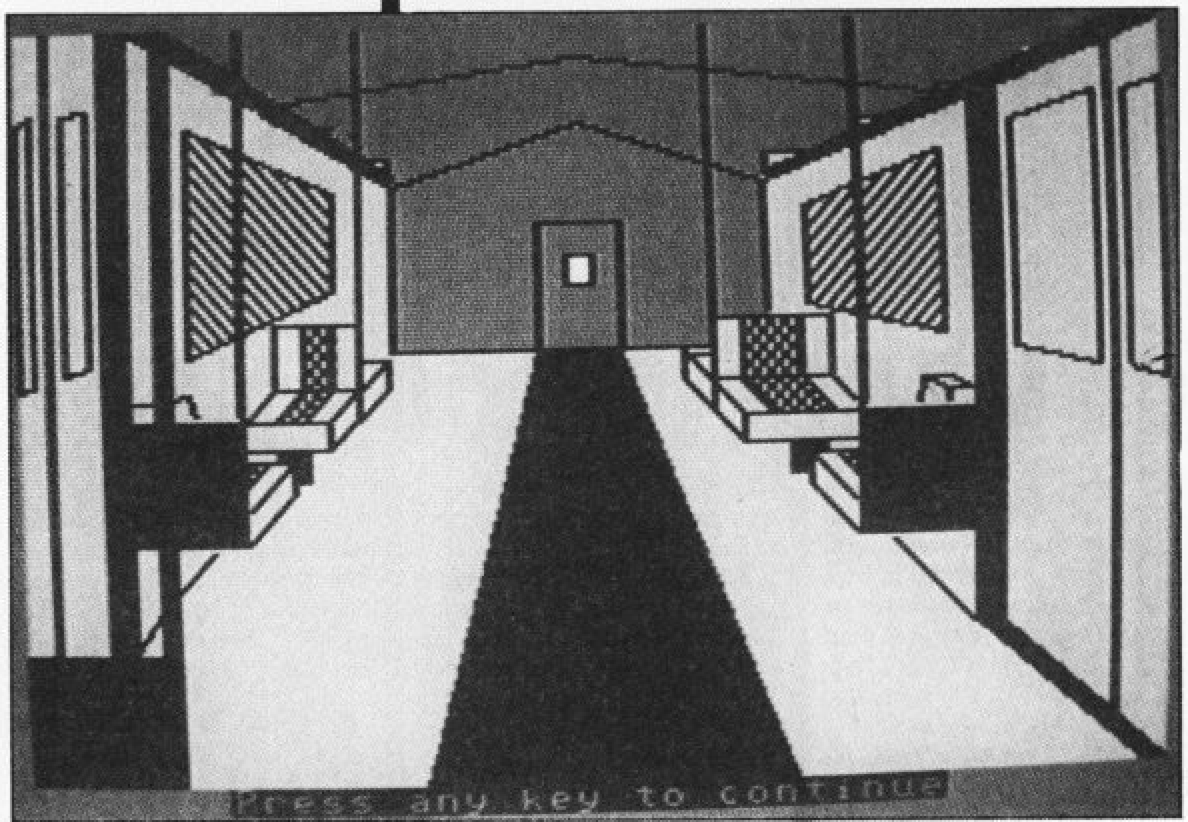
Travel is by an underground rail network linking parts of the base, and through observation windows you can see the missile, but cannot yet get to it — most frustrating. Eventually, you reach a hatch leading to an airlock. Will you drown yourself in the process of operating it?

There is a whole-screen picture for each location, quickly drawn, and displayed only once unless you type LOOK. These are far better than the rather comic graphics of the game's forerunner.

The text is friendly, vocab reasonable, and the response fast, except for some built-in delays. These occur when you EXAMINE or OPEN something, and a new object is about to be revealed. There's also a delay during tube journeys, which is frustrating, as there are quite a few trips to make, each with the same sequence of commands, for each trip. This slows down play considerably.



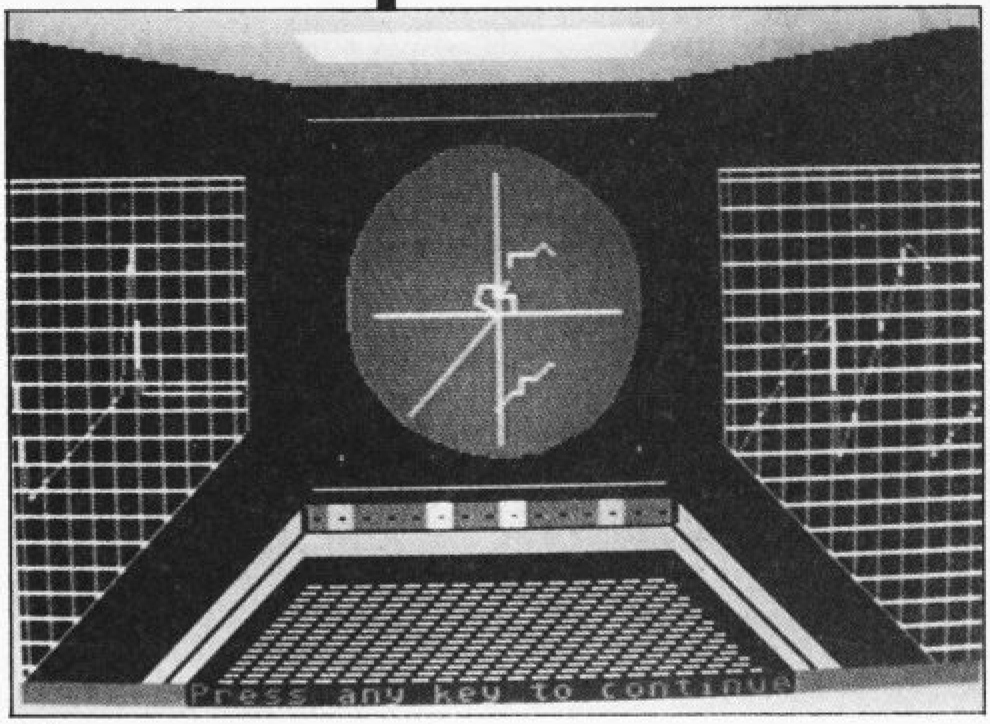
You'll see a lot of these stations — travelling around can be very frustrating.



Travel around the underground rail network in this train compartment.

Still, at £1.99 you can't go wrong — a cheap and cheerful adventure that should please anyone after a light-hearted budget game.

Graphics	★★★
Playability	★★★
Puzzleability	★★★★
Overall	★★★



There's a whole-screen picture for each location, which is drawn very quickly.

INTO THE VALLEY

MYSTERY VOYAGE ADVENTURE

Colleen Ltd.
TA
CBM 64/128
Price: £9.95/cass.

The storm rages around you, your ship is being tossed about on the boiling sea. Make sure you have the volume turned up, for the captain is about to shout: "Take to the lifeboats! We are about to sink!" This is the first synthesised speech I have come across in an adventure. Sadly it's a gimmick and rather metallic, although I suppose anybody's voice would become a bit squeaky if they were about to become shipwrecked!

The narrative introduction, and the voice synthesis to *Mystery Voyage* sets the scene for your predicament: out of sight of land, you lie parched and naked under a burning sun, on a raft circled by a threatening black fin.

Paddling the raft by hand, initially you have no idea of which direction in which to head. But it turns out there are numerous islands dotted about. The sea is not an 'adventure maze', there is logic and pattern to the layout of the islands.

The best method of approach is to map each island individually, and make a separate master map of the sea routes, that way your map will be very manageable and easy to follow. You'll probably have to replay the game quite a few times to build up a complete picture of the objects and information available, before deciding on a strategy to solve the problems.

These are all very different in character, and the most sinister is home to some nasty monsters — including a dead demon whose entrails are being devoured by insects, a very sickening sight indeed, as you'll soon discover.

Most of the problems are not too hard, but the structure of the game makes them a little more difficult to put together, and the game a little more interesting to play than usual.

Mystery Voyage is in three parts, each of which must be completed to continue to the next. Two-word commands are the order of the day, and although the vocabulary leaves a little to be desired, it seems to cover most 'instinctive' words. For example, on coming across a beetle, finding I could not take it, I instinctively tried SQUASH BEETLE, and it worked! Now what I'd want with the squashed beetle I was able to take, I have not yet any idea . . .

The text descriptions are full of atmosphere, but the replies to commands are sometimes a little cold, such as: YOU MAY NOW INPUT AN INSTRUCTION.

Altogether a pleasing game, that should entertain without being too baffling to enjoy.

Graphics	**n/a**
Playability	★★★
Puzzleability	★★★★
Overall	★★★

ADVENTURE CHART

1	3	**Kentilla**	Mastertronic
2	2	**Doomdarks Revenge**	Beyond
3	7	**Alternate Reality**	Datasoft/US Gold
4	NE	**Price of Magik**	Level 9
5	1	**Lord of The Rings**	Melbourne House
6	NE	**Bored of The Rings**	Silversoft
7	6	**Quest for the Holy Grail**	Mastertronic
8	NE	**Very Big Cave Adventure**	CRL
9	10	**Red Moon**	Level 9
10	NE	**Asylum**	All American/U.S. Gold

NEWS

★ **A new Lever-Jones adventure** can be expected from Melbourne House sometime in the autumn. The prototype version is already in the Quill stage, and like its predecessors *Hampstead* and *Terrormolinos*, will be converted into 'proper' code before release. The new game will have the player involved in a bank robbery with a bunch of East End crooks, in what promises to maintain the usual Lever-Jones standard of hilarity.

★ **Watch out** for another multi-player adventure/strategy game available through your modem, around the turn of the year. This one promises to be all that it promises — with the proven quality of Level 9 behind it. Entitled *Avalon*, it is alredy well into the game design stage, and Pete Austin and his brothers have very definite ideas about the hardware, too. Three or four micros with 68020 processors on board, will be linked to control the game, giving a far superior performance than the somewhat outdated and unsuitable VAX equipment used by BT's MUD.

No date is being quoted yet, as Pete doesn't want to let the fans down — but The Valley will be keeping an ear to the ground on your behalf!

★ **As rumoured exclusively** in The Valley a couple of months ago, Isaac Asimov is about to hit adventurer's screens. Adventure Soft have won the licence to produce games under the title "Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine Presents:".

This gives Mike Woodroffe's team the chance to 'adventurise' Asimov's works, as well as introducing some new science fiction stories of their own. First adventure in the series will be *Kayleth*, written by Stefan Ufnowski, known for his development of Rebel Planet.

★ **Rainbird Software** are to re-release the Colossal Trilogy, a revamped version of the Level 9 Middle Earth Trilogy. The three adventures featured are *Colossal Adventure, Dungeon Adventure* and *Adventure Quest*. Originally text-only games, and highly popular amongst enthusiasts, graphics will be added, and text augmented, for the new release.

Knight Orc is a new title planned by Level 9 for the Rainbird label around September time. Here the player will get the chance to play the baddy for once, cast as a miserable cowardly Orc!

JR SOFTWARE

5 Brookes Court, Baldwin Gardens, London EC1
Telephone: 01-242 5409

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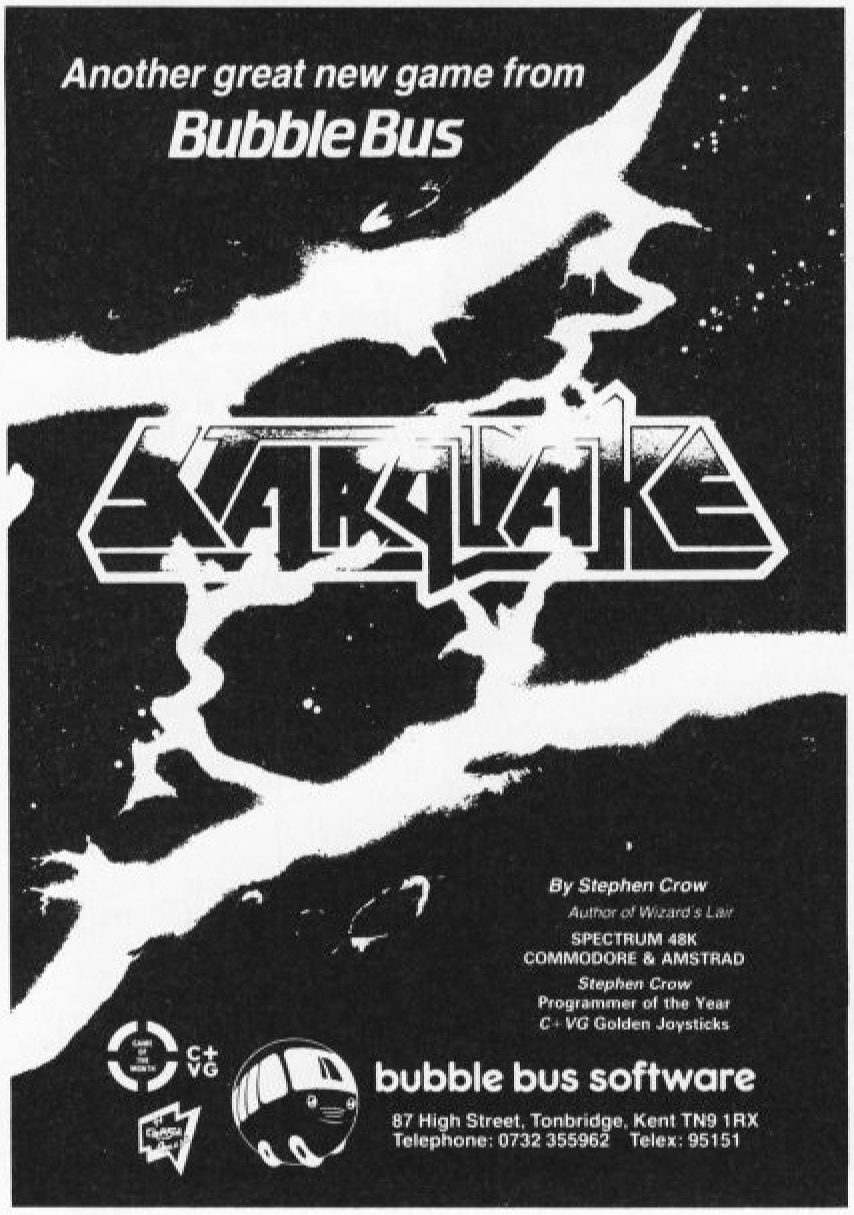
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Weirdware revolution

Dan Gutman reports

You can play games with your 64, write letters, do your accounts, play a tune, paint a picture. What more could you want? Well, if you're not satisfied with doing just ordinary things on your computer, you'd better start checking up on weirdware.

You've heard of hardware? You've heard of software. But I'll bet pounds or dollars that you haven't heard of WEIRDWARE. It's a pretty safe bet for me. I *invented* weirdware.

Recently I've noticed a lot of computer programs that don't fit into the usual categories. They're not games. They're not educational. They're not business applications. They're not word processors. They're *weird*. Nobody else seems to pay much attention to this new type of software.

Let me give you an example. A company called Concept Development recently came out with a program called *Mr. Boston Official Bartender's Guide*. That's right — a computer program that teaches you how to mix drinks! If that's not weird, I don't know what is. But this thing is for real!

The program contains over 1,000 drink recipes with full mixing directions. The computer can search for the most popular summertime drinks or the necessary ingredients to mix a Bermuda Highball, and it will even tell you which drinks you can make if all you've got in the house are vodka and lime juice. *(Vodka and lime? — Ed).* You can print out the recipes and take them to the store with you. The thing is a whiz for all the booze hounds out there.

(If you're one of them, you can write for more information on the program — *Concept Develoment, 7960 Old Georgetown Rd., Suite 2D, Bethesda, Maryland 20814, USA.*).

Mr. Boston may sound a little silly, but I wanted to prove a point. In the United States, everyone asks, "What can you do with a personal computer? Why do I need one?" Well you can do *hundreds* of things. There's more to computer life than word processors and games.

I have uncovered software for the Commodore 64/128 that will help you trace your family roots, learn to speedread, learn Morse code, dissect a frog, build your muscles, analyze your personality, make paper airplanes, analyze your sexuality, and dozens more. Some of them are practical, some are merely interesting, and some are kind of goofy. There's even a program that will help you write your last will and testament (which proves that computers can be useful even if you're *dead!*).

You probably haven't heard of this stuff because it's made by small companies that don't have a lot of money to spend on advertising and publicity. But these are real programs from professional software publishers. You can buy them and run them right out of the box, and you don't even have to know anything about computers or programming.

Is there anything like this in England? If so, please write me and tell me about it. I *love* weirdware. Who needs spreadsheets and databases when there are programs out there that keep track of your bowling average?

Here's a small sample of some American weirdware you might be interested in. I've provided the addresses of all the companies so you can write for more information.

● **Plantin' Pal** Helps you plan your garden. Tells you which plants grow best in which temperature ranges and how much of each vegetable you should plant to feed a specific number of people. Also designs the layout of the garden according to how much space you have. *(Home & Hobby Software, 4336 Morgan Ave. South, Minneapolis MN 55409).*

● **Biorhythm Status** People who believe in biorhythms think our physical, emotional and intellectual well being go up and down in regular cycles that start the day we are born. This program calculates your personal biorhythm chart and tells you what your status is today. *(Ashby & Associates, P.O. Box 594, Chagrin Falls, Ohio 44022 USA).*

● **BodyLink** This is a weird new device that is basically a big steel spring that plugs in the back of the C64/128. It comes with a simple game in which a helicopter flies around when you press on the spring. The harder you press, the longer the helicopter stays in the air. So as you play the game, you're getting a workout! Has to be seen to be believed! *(BodyLog, 120 Mt. Kisco Ave., Mt. Kisco, New York 10549 USA).*

● **The Hypnotist** A hardware/software device that uses biofeedback and behaviour modification techniques to put you into a trance state. Once you're under, the computer can flash subliminal messages to help you stop smoking, lose weight or stop bad habits. *(Psycom Software, 2118 Forest Lake Dr., Cincinnati, Ohio 45244 USA).*

● **ORS Digital Music Library** The music of famous pianists like Scott Joplin and George Gershwin had been "digitally" preserved on player piano rolls. Those rolls have now been translated to floppy disks, so you can actually hear Gershwin playing piano in your house! Outrageous! *(Micro-W, 1352B Route 23, Butler, New Jersey 07405 USA).*

And that doesn't even scratch the surface! It's impossible for me to cover all the weirdware out there on this one page. So, guess what, Commodore fans. I'm writing a book on the subject! I'm not sure of the exact title yet, but it will probably be something along the lines of *"I Didn't Know You Could Do That With A Computer!"* and you should SCREAM at your local bookseller until he orders a few thousand copies for his store. Tell him weirdware is where it's at. Tell him weirdware is what this computer revolution needs. Tell him computer lovers need this book.

And tell him I need the money. See ya next time.



Play to WiN

Ocean's *V* game, based on the TV series of the same name, asked you to play the part of the rebel leader Donovan but it didn't give you much help as to how. We've put together a comprehensive set of hints that'll put you one up on the aliens and enable you to save earth. Phew! And you'd thought you'd never do it. . . .

You will probably have noticed that the map for 'V' changes ever time you RESTORE the game. However, when initially loaded, the first game is always the same — so a few specific playtips are given later to help with the first game only.

GENERAL PLAY

Practice exactly where to stand on the beamer pads so that you don't repeatedly switch the Communiputer on when trying to teleport. This will save vital time (a) after the explosives have been laid, (b) when running from hostile robots.

If not on the first game, RESTORE the game until you start on plane 0 or 4 — this will make your bombing run easier as expained below.

Your first priority should be to empty red dust into the air: collect parts of the formulas from one lab in each plane, once all 5 parts of the dust formula have been collected, use the recall data key to examine the 5 symbols on the "data recall" card.

Translate each of their values using the keypad and add all 5 together. Convert this sum back into base 6 and now translate this base 6 number into lizard symbols. Now go to the air plant, log on to the computer terminal there and enter this number into the air plant computer terminal using the keypad. This will reduce the frequency and efficiency of hostile robots. It also makes the screen turn a lovely shade of pink.

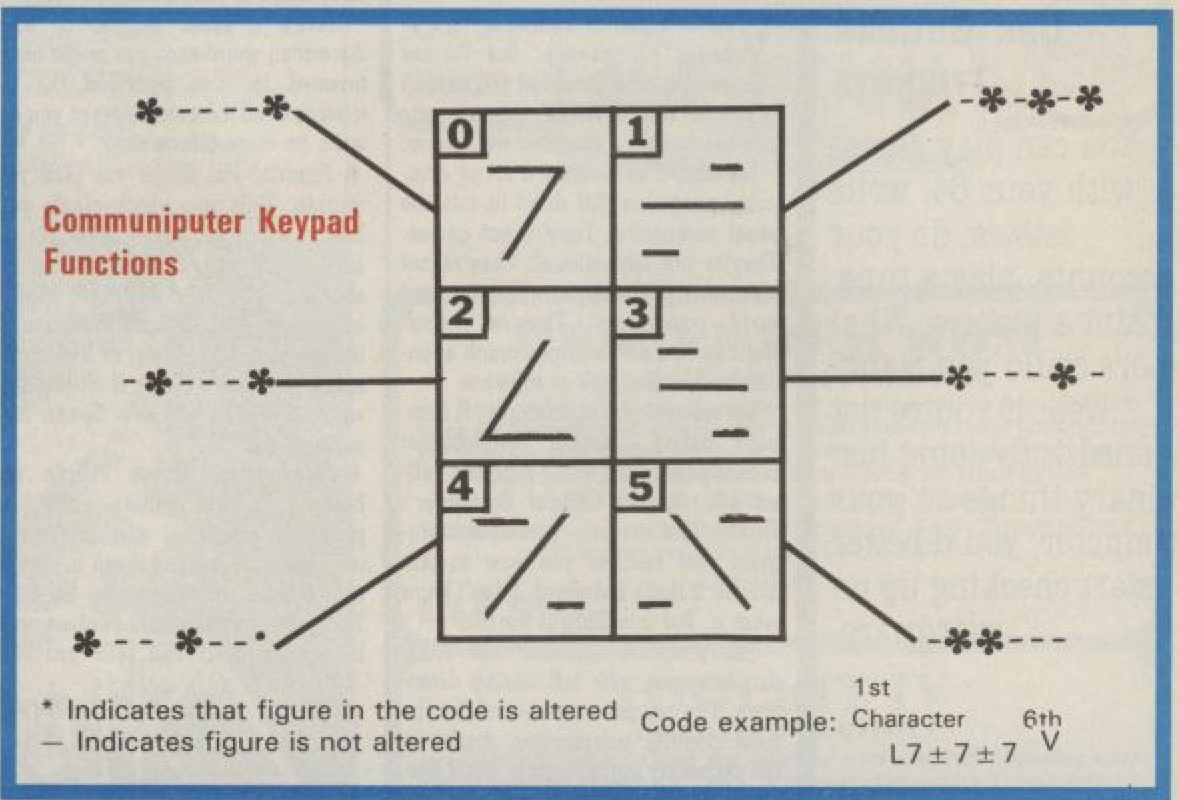
Now head to the plane which is furthest from the docking bay (either 0 or 4 provided you *did* start as explained above!), find the key point (there is only 1 per plane) and plant a bomb. You now have approx. 30 minutes to finish the game, so head rapidly for the next plane.

Repeating this process on every plane you should finish in the docking bay — plant the final bomb and . . . wait and see!!

NOTES ON PLAY

VITAL: when planting bombs make sure that your 'present location' as given by the Communiputer exactly matches that of the key point to be bombed. Failure to do this will result in extreme confusion (!) when the last bomb is planted in the bay and Donovan then finds he has to sit around until he becomes a Mikeburger.

When strolling around the decks, remember that beamer pads always take you below any wall which they are adjacent to — they will





sometimes be arranged to look otherwise (pads in vertical line, but the top pad in the middle of a passage). Any pad not next to a wall blocking the passage will take you UP.

When searching for inter-plane doors remember:

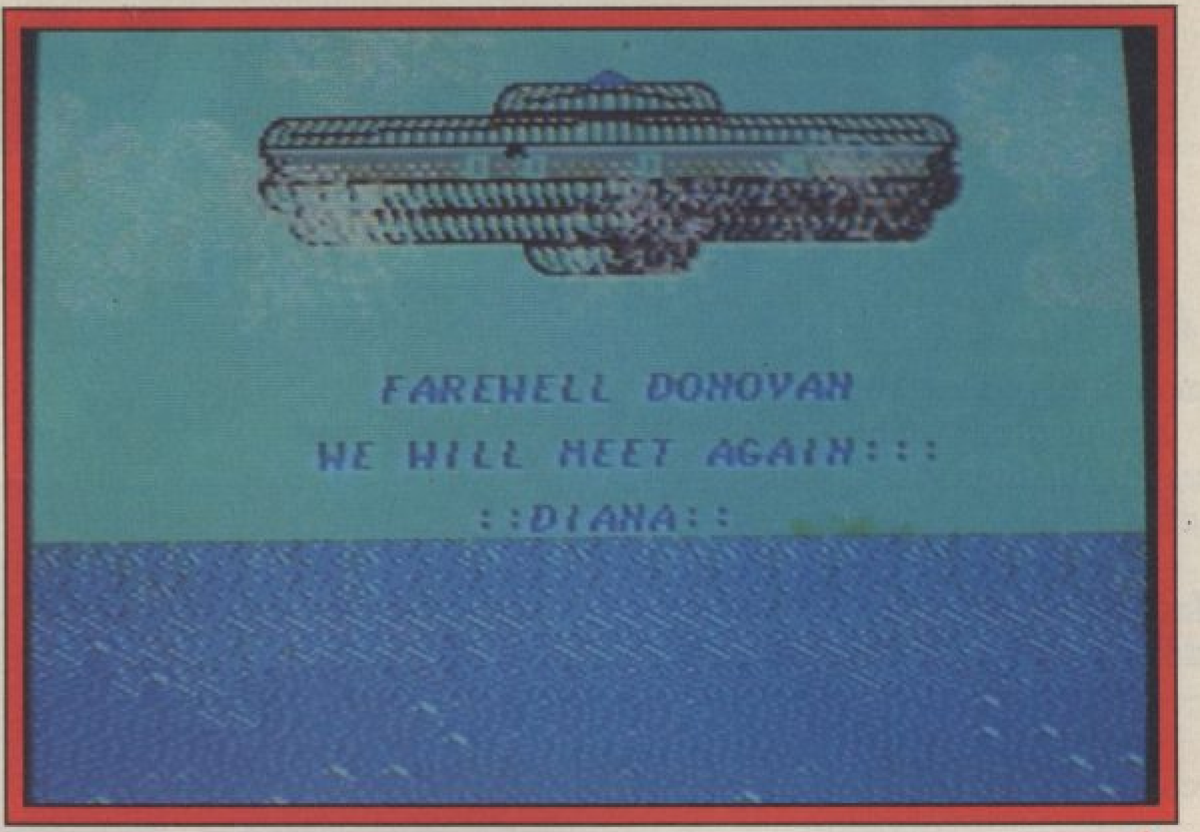
Outward doors take you from plane 4 0 and have RED insignia.

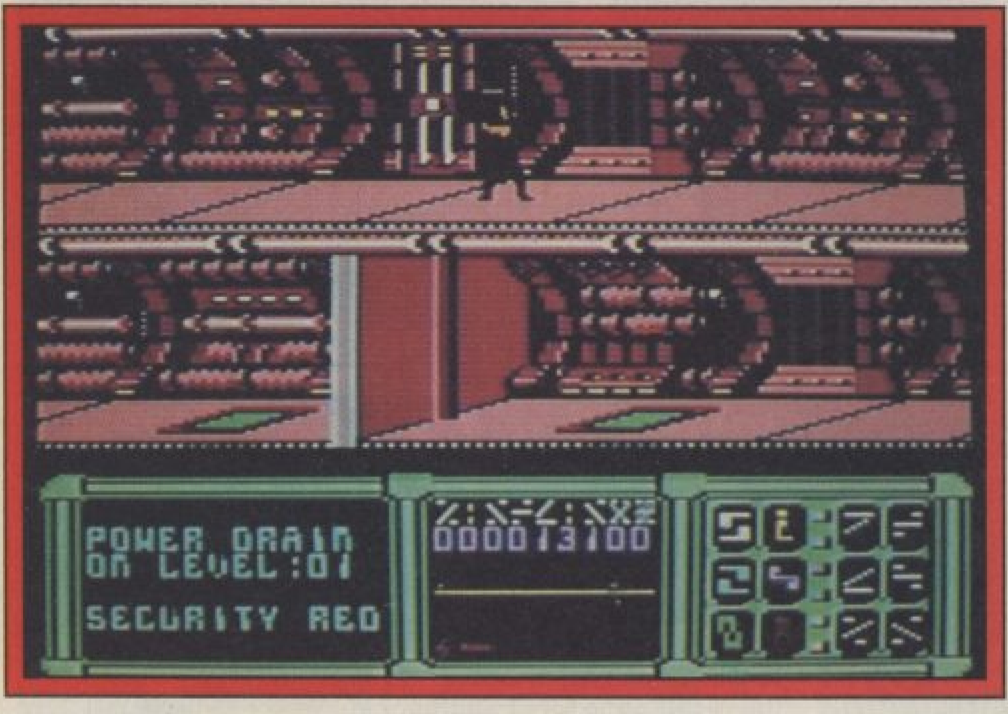
Inward doors take you from plane 0 and have YELLOW insignia.

RECHARGING

The laser may be recharged at 2 types of terminal:

1) Two white vertical lines run from floor and ceiling to a black box with 1 white blob at its centre. Place Donovan so his head covers the single white blob.





2) Outside the left-hand security door of labs are what look like bright horizontal fluorescent tubes. Place Donovan so his head is directly beneath the vertical (cyan) bar just beyond this.

To recharge pull down on the joystick as if switching the Communiputer on, and hold until the laser power (the red line) is completely replenished.

SECURITY DOORS

(N.B. See diagram for explanation of Communiputer keys in security cracking.)

One of the commonest problems when cracking doors is when you are left with all the characters similar except one.

Use the keys to get the one character to either end of the code. Now use the following sequence, each time pressing the key mentioned until the one unusual character has been moved to a different place in the code (but there are still 5 similar characters):

0- to move it to 6th character (in code)
2- to move it to 2nd character
5- to move it to 3rd character
1- to change the code until only the 1st and 5th character are unusual
3- to complete the code

NOTES ON FIRST GAME

Here are a few hints to help play on the 1st game: The code for the Air Plant is Key 1 followed by Key 2.
The formulas are in the following labs:

Plane	Lab location
4	5,6
3	15,4
2	5,5
1	15,2
0	15,4

A NOTE ON BASE 6

In base 6 each digit in the 2nd column represents 6 and the highest value in the column is 5. In the 1st column each digit represents 1 but again the highest value is 5, so the highest number is 55 which represents 35 in base 10, (5*6) + (5*1). E.g. 9 in base 10 is 13 in base 6, (1*6) + (3*1).

Daniel Gilbert



Play to WiN

Since we gave it a Screen Star last month, *Spindizzy* has had us glued to the screen. The gameplay, based on the excellent coin-op *Marble Madness*, is classically addictive as you guide a sphere through networks of shapes collecting jewels. We were worried about the effect it might have on some of you if you couldn't finish it, so we asked David Conti and Adrian Bott to put together a little map and a few tips to help you on your way

CU Hints and tips

The following hints are to be used in conjunction with the accompanying map. Positions are shown by grid reference and switches referred to by appropriate letter.

▼

X18 has a secret passage in the bottom left-hand-wall that leads to **Y/18**.

▼

In **X/20** touch switch type D — the lift is now operational.

▼

In **Y/20** touch switch type A then D- this produced a useful bridge.

▼

K1/21 is the start of some fun on the trampolines. Go up the lifts and stop on the far end of the blocks. Now charge very fast onto the trampolines: you should bounce clear of the first room of eraser switches and land on the next set of trampolines which spring you into **I1/21**. Proceed into **I1/20** and touch switch type D — use the ramp to exit the room, or the reraser switches will negate your hard work. The switches you have are used in **I1/22** to help you get the jewel.

▼

In **Y/10** activate switches type F and H: these start two lifts, which have to be started at different times if they are to be used successfully. In **C1/13** activate switch type I — the lift will start to move. Stop it with switch type K when it is level with the top block. If your positioning is correct, you should be able to roll up the ramp and on to the lift. Below you are a pair of eraser switches which must be jumped over from the lift. If this is successfully done, go to **D1/11** and use switch type D. A bridge and a gap in the wall should appear . . . this opens up a new area!

▼

In **Q/15** use switches type D and F to activate lift in **Q/16** and to create an exit bridge in **R/16**. In **Q/2** use lift to go up then carefully touch switch B. Another bridge is created. Use this to enter **Q/3** and use switch type D to create yet another bridge . . . . Use this to enter **Q/4**, and use the trampolines here to bounce you into **Q/5**.

▼

In **O/15** touch switch type H then descend ramp in to **M/14**. In **M/14** touch switch F. Now go down steps and into **O/16** — you should notice a large ramp has appeared. If you go up this and use switch J it will open a door in **M/15**. But first go to **N/13**, up the ramp and jump on to the large set of blocks with the jewel. Go down the small ramp and jump through **N/14** and **N/15** as fast as possible. You should end up in **N/16**. Here, touch switch type B — this starts the lift in **M/15**. In **M/15** go up the lift and touch switch type I. Leave the room, go to **O/14** and up the ramp into **O/13**. Use the lift to reach the other platform. Now fly off the platform as fast as you can and on to the trampolines — you will bounce into the next locations. You should land on the isolated platform in **O/16**. Touch switch type D (which helps in room **O/14**) and use the steps to go down. Now go to **P/14**, up the ramp and into **O/14**. Use the switch, which starts the lifts in **M/14**. If these are used correctly, you will be free to explore again.

▼

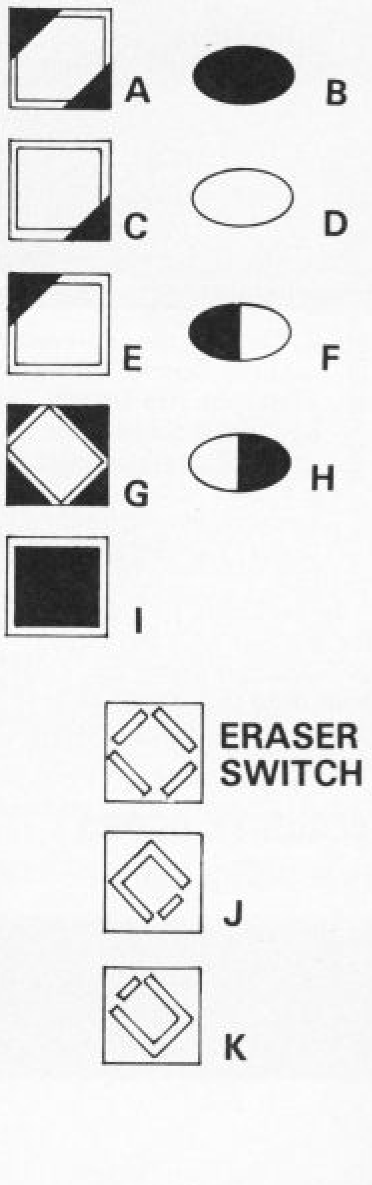
In **W/25** go up the ramp and then carefully into **X/25**. From there go to **X/24** and use switch B, go down via lift and then roll on to catwalk at screen left. Proceed to **X/28**: stay on the raised blocks to avoid the eraser switches. Now head to **V/28**, where you will notice a ramp that leads to **V/30**. Get a long run up and jump into this room.

▼

From **V/30** go to **V/31** and use trampolines to enter **W/31** and **U/31**. Activate switch B in **W/31** and D in **U/31**. Now, with both switches, go to **V/32** and use lifts to get to switch. This switch creates a ramp in **U/31** — use this to jump into **S/31**.

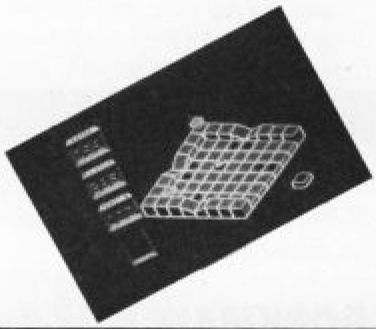
KEY

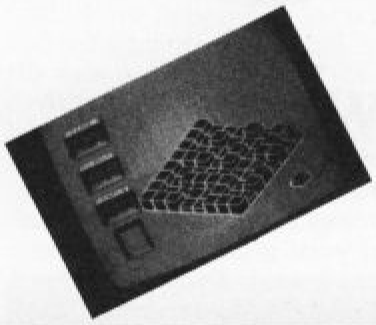
SWITCHES

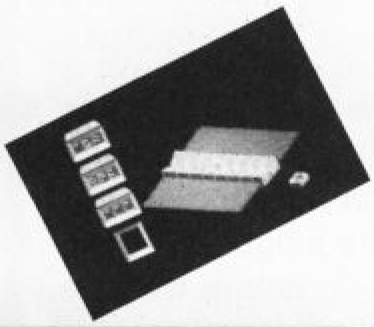


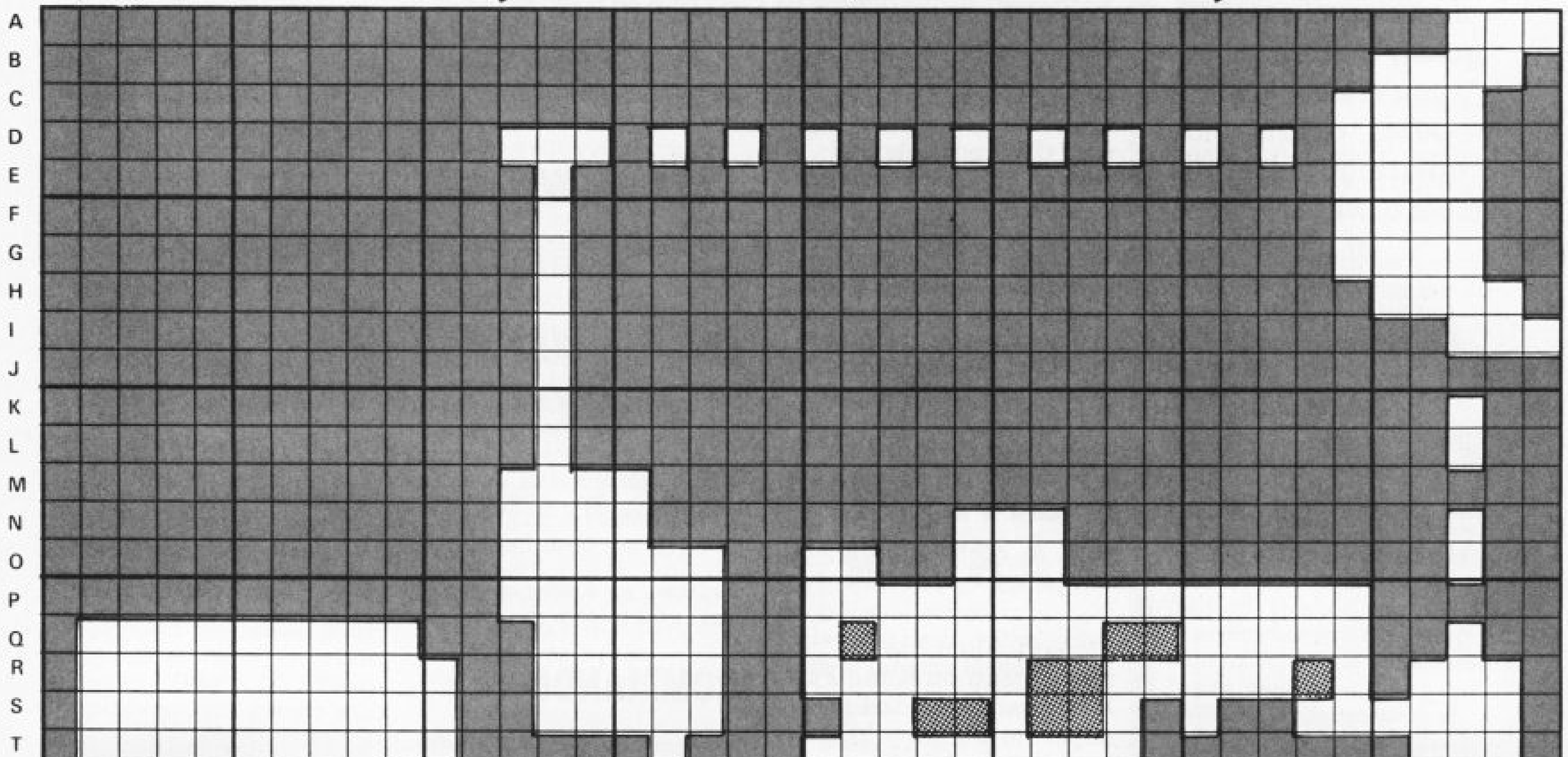
SPINDIZZY











Play to WiN

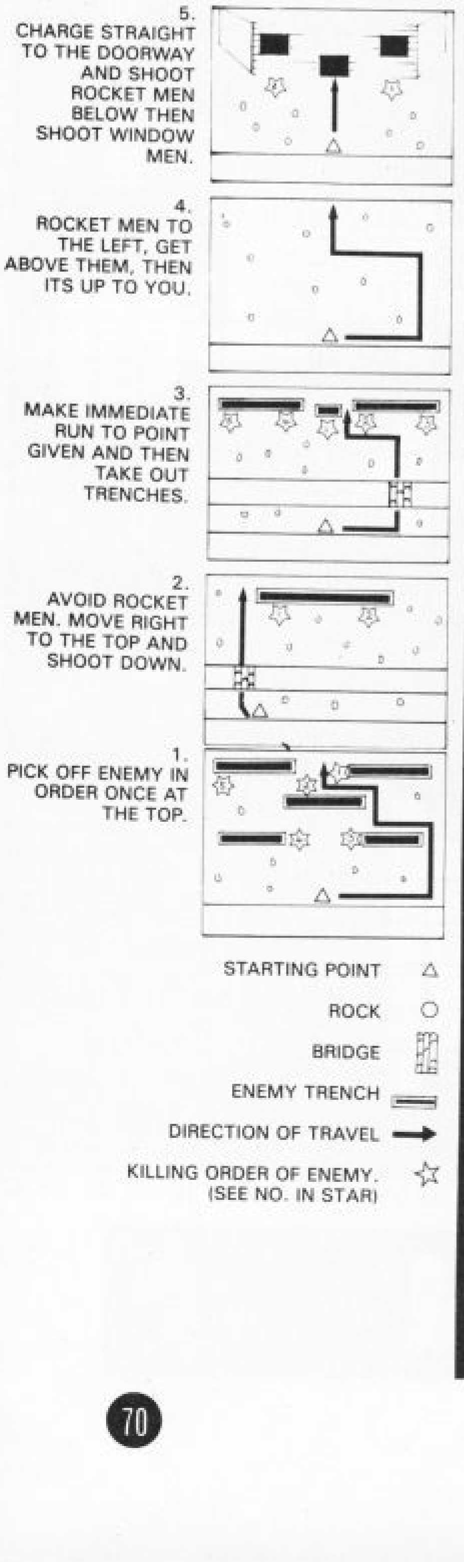
Play to WiN

Welcome to Play to Win. We've moved it from the supplements to the magazine. Each month we'll be mapping a popular game, and bringing you a selection of pokes, cheats and advice on software across a whole range of machines.

We kick off this month with a map of the alien mothership in *V* and back this up with a pile of pokes to take the strain out of your gaming. There's tips too on *Nodes of Yessod, Kung Fu Master* and *Time Tunnel*, plus a few helpful bits and pieces.

We'll be doing most of the work, but we also want to hear from you. We want your tips and hints and we'll pay you fair and square in the hand. If we print anything you send in — and remember it must be original and up-to-date — we'll give you the choice of one of the latest games or a fiver. You can't say fairer than that can you?

COMMANDO C-16



KUNG FU MASTER

Richard Allen has the upper hand on Kung Fu Master and decided to impart to us his knowledge of the guardians.

1st Floor. There's a man with a stick who confronts you. Run straight at him and go as far forward as you can. He will then move back. Kick him twice and then run forward, he will move back again, and so on.

2nd Floor (Man with boomerang)
You can tell if this guy's going to throw it high or low. If he's going to throw it high, run in towards him duck down and kick him until he falls. If he throws it low, stay back, jump over it then run in and kick him.

3rd Floor (Giant) Duck down and when he comes towards you, you do a lot of leg sweeps until he falls.

4th Floor (Magicians) Use the punch here. Take the one on the left first and then the one on the right dropping down to punch to his body.

5th Floor (Kung Fu Master) Use every sort of move on him except the jump punch.

G-Force member James Pickering has generously offered to share a few of his pokes for C16 titles.

ROCKMAN

When you are in room 1, the exit usually takes you to room 2, but if you alter the machine code it could be any room, the music also changes. M1E70 change B3 to B5: SYS4128 runs the game.

XARGON WARS

Start the game at Xargon 09 M2A50 change B3 to B9. SYS7296 runs the game.

MR. PUNIVERSE

This tip takes out the cannon and levels out the pulverisers. M15F0 change B2 to B9: SYS6900 runs the game.

Also in Mr Puniverse you can jump backwards at great speed and walk through walls backwards, so you can get onto all different screens. M2170 change 38 to 39: SYS6900.

And now if you'd rather let your fingers do the talking in gamesplaying here's a few pokes to give you that added edge.

COMMANDO

After a full reset, POKE 2225, 240 and SYS 2128 to start the game with extra lives.

WIZARDRY

Type LOAD, when small bit loads, type POKE 1011,248:POKE 1012,252 (RETURN) RUN
When NOVA loads, 64 will reset. Then
POKE 2969,0 (RETURN)
SYS 2816 (RETURN)
The four slow sections will load. After they load, type
POKE 3216,255:50766,255 (RETURN)
POKE 3264,234:3265,234 (RETURN)
POKE 27214,234:50151,234 (RETURN)
POKE 50152,234:50153,234 (RETURN)
SYS 2970
These pokes will give you more energy and stop most of the nasties from killing you. Thanks to Bruno Jackson, Lancaster.

BLACKWYCHE

David Fairweather of Darwen in Lancashire has sent us some pokes for infinite energy in *Blackwyche*.

```
10 SYS 63278: POKE 830,100: POKE 831,174: POKE 832, 102:SYS 62828
20 FOR A=679 TO 767: POKE A, PEEK (25088+A): NEXT
30 FOR A=828 TO 1200: POKE A PEEK (25088+A): NEXT
40 POKE 990, 141: POKE 991,74: POKE 992,18:SYS 1024
```

NODES OF YESOD

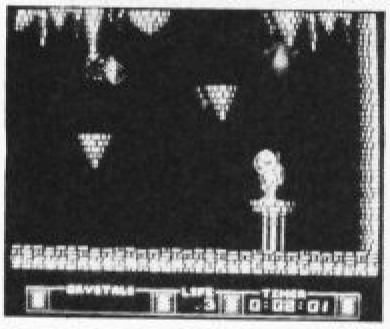
Play from the keyboard because some of the jumps require pixel accuracy. In general don't stand around for long periods and use the pause facility frequently.

There are three main types of nasties in the game:

● 1) Monsters that can be destroyed, such as spring monsters, bugs, crystal clouds and whirlwinds. Use the mole to destroy them as this does not drain your energy.

● 2) Indestructible monsters. These are horned demons, rock monsters, repulser plants, fish, worms, liver birds and cockroaches. Contact with these will bounce you all over the screen draining large amounts of energy. The mole has no affect on these so they're best avoided where possible. Their movements always take place along fixed paths so they can be dodged with a bit of timeing.

● 3) Alien spacemen. Your only defence is to leave the screen — they won't follow, or place an anti-gravity stick.



Gravity sticks: are acquired with extra lives. These destroy all killable monsters but should be saved for the alien spacemen.

Mole Mode: Once the mole starts to eat into a well you are powerless to recall it, therefore before activating it try to hid in the lee of a plynth or under a low stone outcrop which tend to deflect many of the monsters that home in you.

False floors: the edge of these can be found as the mole is able to sink into them.

Updraught chute. In here you move through many screens safely. You can rise up the chute simply by jumping from the bottom. Beware though as you will gravitate to which ever well you are facing. If this doesn't contain the mole hole you entered through, you will reach the roof and then plummet rapidly to lose a life.

TIME TUNNEL

Justin Stoddart from Grays, Essex wrote to us with some hints to help you through some of the locations in US Gold's *Time Tunnel*.

STONEHENGE

Get the stick and shoot down the two small rocks with your lightining which are at the top of the screen. Take them all to the round boulder blocking your path on the left. Put the stick up against the boulder, then climb to the top platform with the two rocks and drop the large on first then the small one. The boulder should now move.

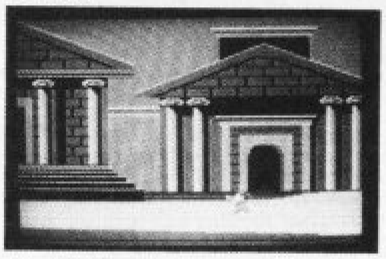
Go along to the cave on the next screen, the scripture is in a cave.

MAGICAL PERSIA

Take the glass from the mansion and place it next to the flask of wine where the woman is, drop them, the woman will come down and give you a key you need to get the dynamite from the safe aboard the spaceship. With this and the lantern blow up the large boulder. Take the lantern through the hole with you and get the lamp from the room. Take the lamp to the basket and shoot the lamp. Open the basket and play the flute to the snake.

INTERGALACTIC SPACESHIP

Pull the two levers in the spaceship go back to the control panel and take the cross from it. Go to the right through the foor and open the safe. Take the cross and place it in the cross shape to the right of the safe, then go through the door that opens (before this get the oxygen tank from the California Gold Rush (where the lift is). Put the triangle key found in the safe in the bottom of the first pad. Put the oxygen tank on the same pad as you and the transport to the moon the piece of scripture is in the top right hand corner.



COLONIAL SALEM

Get the broom from the shop plus the second potion and take them to the log house on the left. Firstly get the brown cauldron from the spaceship. Then put the cauldron in the fireplace, put the broom in the cauldron and the two potions and a bat that you can shoot. Fire at all this twice then jump on the broom go out of the house over to the island, the piece of scripture is under a rock, so is the way back to Gnome Mansion.

YIE AR KUNG FU

Lots of people have had trouble getting past the last, and toughest fighter called 'Blues' in Ocean's *Yie-ar Kung-Fu*. Here's how Fu Sang Li from Cheshire does it.

When you get on to Blues, do not move from your position. Just before he lands next to you, pull down your joystick and keep on hitting the fire button like mad (and I mean like mad). If your joystick has auto-fire, then use it! If Blues decides to move to left or right then quickly move the joystick slightly to the opposite direction, and keep hitting the fire button. If you follow these instructions correctly, then you should be able to beat him (my highest score is 3,847,600 points).

Here's a few quickies for you ● ● ●

RAMBO

For Rambo fans struggling to beat the enemy helicopter, plug in two joysticks and push one forward and the other back to get a turbo up the screen.

ACE

This one's for *ACE* players: climb to around 50,000 feet after take-off and then go into a nose dive at full speed. When you reach 18000 throttle right back, velocity should reach around 20,000 — pull out of the dive with no thrust. The plane will then fly at 2000 without using any fuel.

TOM THUMB

Here's one for C16 owners, from Paul O'Brien of Salford. If when you play *Tom Thumb* you find it very frustrating to get sent back to the beginning every time you lose a life, instead of pressing fire to restart pull back on the joystick. This will result in you being put back to the place where you last picked something up or opened a door.

WINTER GAMES

To achieve massive distance in the Ski Jump in Winter Games just follow Dutch reader Ruud van Spanje's tip. As soon as you take off wiggle your joystick round and round (like cycling in Summer Games II) to achieve a huge jump.

Play to WiN

Send your pokes, tips, maps etc to: Play to Win, *Commodore User*, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane EC1R 3AU.

Get more from SUPERBASE

by Geof Wheelwright

Part One

Superbase is probably the most popular and the most sophisticated database around for the 64 and 128. But the more a package can do, the more you'll need to understand about it. We start a two-part series this month, showing you how to make full use of this sophisticated program. We asked the technical department at Precision Software to come up with answers to questions most often asked by Superbase users.



? How can I use Superbase to generate records with a unique number in a particular field? For invoice numbers, for example?

The following program will create a new record with invoice numbers stored in a key field called 'key?' the key field is four characters in length. The numbers are placed in the key field of a new record and then that record is stored. In order to keep the file in order the numbers have leading zeroes placed in front of them to make sure they are stored in sequence.

The program also makes use of a command called 'check': this command is used here to ensure that there is a field called 'key' in this file. If you want to avoid running the program on an incorrect file, you must give the key field a name that is not shared by a field in any other file. If you have selected the wrong file, the program will display the message "you are in the wrong file", ask for the correct file name and re-execute itself.

```
10  set "store":rem get last
    number
20  b=va1(b$):rem convert string
    to real number
30  b=b+1:b$=str$(b):b$=mid$
    (b$,2): b$=rights$(("0000"+
    b$), 4): rem make key with
    new number
40  check "[f2]": display "you
    are in the wrong file":
    wait:file:run
41  clear: [f2]=b$
45  store:select b$:select r:rem
    store
50  dump "store"
100 ask "Another";a$:if
    a$="Y"or a$="y"then goto
    20
110 if a$="n"or a$="N"then
    menu
130 display @+"Incorrect
    Response, Retry": goto 100
```

Before running the program it is necessary to set a starting value for the variable B and to store it in a file called 'store'. To do this, type the following on the command line: **clr.b$="0000":dump"store"** and press RETURN.

A file called "store" will be created using b$. This program is an example only. In order to take full advantage of the full power of Superbase, you will need to learn to use such routines in programs specifically written with your needs in mind. Use of the programming section of the Superbase manual, and any book on Basic programming will help you develop your skills in using Superbase.

? Every time I use Superbase I have to set my own margins and printer definitions. Can I do it in a simpler way?

Yes. Edit the 'start' program on your work disk. When Superbase first looks at your work disk it uses the start program to set all the default values for page layouts and printer interfacing. The start program may be edited and saved back to the work disk. Now each time that disk is used, your custom default values will be set up automatically.

In the same way, the start program can be used to present a menu, enter a specific file or database, perform a report, update a set of records or just about anything else. All this may be achieved just by editing the start program.

? When I use the labels program and I don't want to use an existing layout I get 'file not found error'. Why?

Early copies of the labels program had one part only. Later copies have a second part called 'makelabels'. It is this part that cannot be found. To correct this, transfer makelabels to your work disk.

? Can I load data into Superbase from another database or from a word processor?

Yes, providing that a sequential file of known format is used with the import command built into Superbase.

The key thing to remember is that the file format and the arrangement of data in the disk file must correspond exactly. If they do not, the operation will become unsynchronized and fail.

? Why do I only get half a page when I use the screen dump command for the third time?

The screen dump option is sometimes thought by naive users to be the main way of obtaining printed copies of records. In fact it is intended as an occasional convenience. However, there are circumstances in which the screen dump is valuable, when you want hard copies of your record formats or memo screens or help screens. A simple CRTL-P normally suffices, but you may find if you use the function repeatedly that every third CTRL-P seems to fail.

The reason is that Superbase counts the printed lines against the current value for 'TLEN', normally 60. As the length of format and memo screens is 23 lines, two CTRL-P's take the counter to 46, leaving insufficient room for the third screen. The solution is to set 'TLEN' to 46, which causes Superbase to start a new page after every two printouts.

The CTRL-O option is not available in all versions of Superbase. It is similar to CTRL-P, except that the top two lines of the screen are also printed. The option is intended to facilitate documentation of the system. Note that you would have to set 'TLEN' to 50 to permit repeated printout with CTRL-O.

? When I delete records I don't release any disk space — why?

Superbase compacts data and allocates space in half blocks. This means that retrieval is fast and storage is economic. But, it also means that if only half a block is in use after a delete, the whole block needs to remain allocated.

To regain and compact deleted record space use the utility program.

Money Matters

by Geof Wheelwright

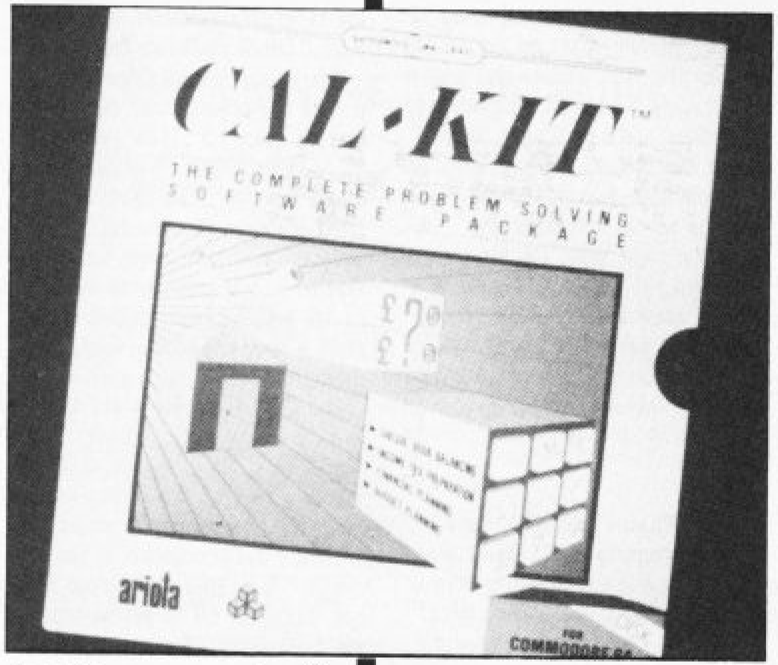
Cal-Kit reviewed

CalKit describes itself as the "complete problem solving software package" – problems of the financial variety, that is. It claims to let you use your Commodore 64/128 to come to grips with nasties like Income Tax, balancing your cheque-book, planning budgets and many more sticky money problems in the home or small business.

CalKit is an unusual piece of software that looks like a spreadsheet but acts like a series of financial programs – intended both for the home and the office.

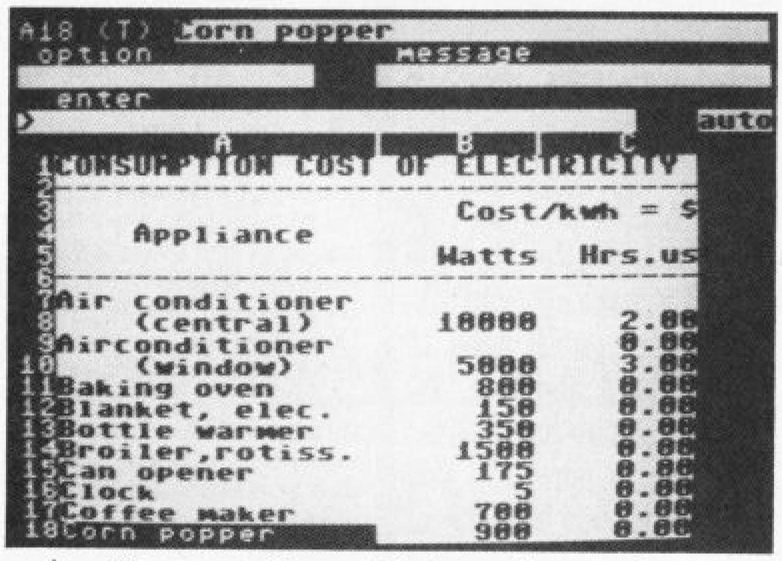
But the idea is really pretty simple: rather than just offering a bog-standard spreadsheet (of which there are now a large number for the 64) or the usual collection of checkbook balancer, investment portfolio manager, budget planner found in other 'specialist' financial 'bundles', Batteries Included decided to combine the two.

The result is a spreadsheet which comes ready-made with 20 different 'forms' to solve what its authors call 'home, school and business problems'. It comes in the high standard of packaging we have come to expect from both Batteries Included and Ariolasoft (the UK importer responsible for bringing in so many US 64/128 business applications into the country), with joystick-port ROM 'key', disk and manual in a sturdy plastic box.



Cal-Kit — a set of ready-to-use spreadsheets to solve your money problems.

Although the software comes with only one disk and no back-up copy, the use of a ROM key to ensure against copy protection means that you can make as many back-up copies as you like of the software. There's no danger of you passing those copies onto friends, however, as they won't run without the ROM key plugged into the joystick port – but it does mean that you shuld never be prevented from using the software due to a physically damaged master disk.



Do you really need to know how much your corn popper costs to run?

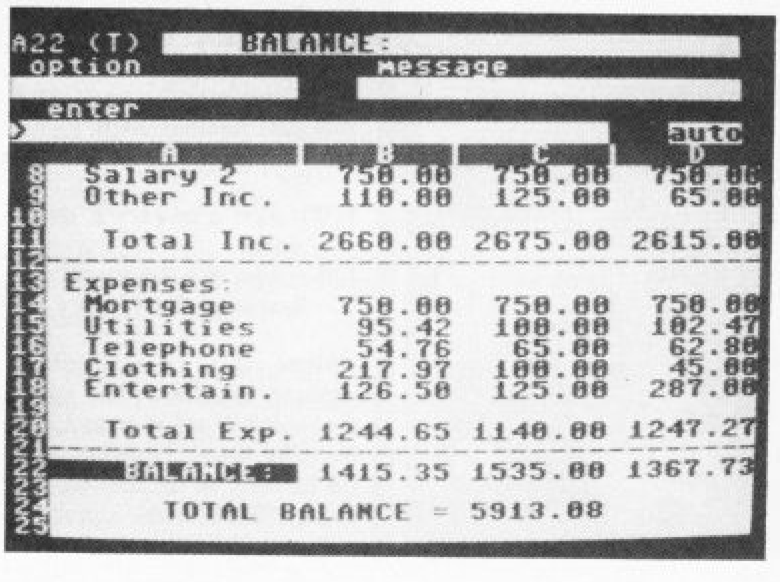
Once you've loaded the software, the screen looks very familiar. The majority of it is taken up with a standard-looking 40-column 'worksheet' with cells defined in the A1,B1 . . . etc convention – cells A1 to D18 can be viewed on-screen at this point.

The difference is, however, that the top five lines of the screen are taken up with non-standard spreadsheet information. The top line shows the actual contents of a cell (cell references, formulae, etc), the second line deals with 'option messages', the third with telling you essential details such as how much free memory you have left, the fourth with menu options (i.e. Load, Save, Print, Disk and Quit) and the fifth to actually allow you to type in commands from the fourth-line menu.

The top-heavy screen information structure probably takes up a little more space than it needs to – and when combined with the optional 'help' system at the bottom of the screen – leaves you little room to actually look at what you're working on. Although a spreadsheet is inevitably only a 'window' onto a larger piece of work, the more you can see of that window, the easier it is to work with.

The real advantage of CalKit over any other spreadsheet, however, has to come in the many pre-defined

Cheque book balancer lets you keep tabs on your family spending.



spreadsheets which actually come with it. These include:

● **Home Budget** — a home budget form with categories already created for most common household costs, incomes and expenses. It features two columns for each month — one with your budgetted expenses and incomings and the other with your actual, allowing you to easily compare the two.

● **Check book** — the ubiquitous electronic chequebook balancer makes yet another appearance here. But, this seems a slightly more basic spreadsheet model than is really called for.

● **Electricity calculations** — by entering the number of hours of electricity consumed by your most often-used household appliances and their power drain, this sheet claims to allow you to optimise your electricity usage. Again, it's not something that would have been too hard to figure out yourself.

Although I would like to think that these pre-programmed sheets and the others that are included in this package are somewhat a leap forward for spreadsheet designers, I can't help thinking that this is just a clever way of re-packaging a pretty non-descript 64 spreadsheet.

I also couldn't help feeling that CalKit still had an American feel about it. References are made to the 'utilities' category in the Home Finance spreadsheet, but 'utilities' is an American term commonly used to describe charges for heating, gas and electricity.

Also, it's worrying that such a package should ignore such essential U.K.-orientated problems as VAT calculations. This suggests that not enough effort and attention has been paid to Anglicising the program — it really isn't good enough.

The real problem is that CalKit appears to be a bit of a mystery 'grab-bag' of pre-defined elements — none of which really grabbed me. At the price, however, it's not a bad general-purpose spreadsheet and is suitable for most lightweight calculation work. □

- CalKit
- Commodore 64/128
- Ariolasoft Ltd
  68 Long Acre
  London WC1
  01-836 3411
- Price: £34.95 (disk only)

BUSINESS NEWS



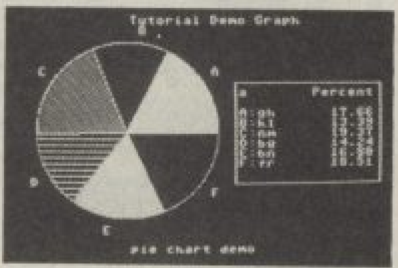
Paperclip gets Spelling Checker

Ariolasoft has just announced an enhanced version of *New Paperclip* (reviewed in the May issue). The new package contains the Spellpack spelling checker, available both in 64 and 128 mode, on the same disk. Of course, you'll have to pay a little bit more for it, £59.95 in fact. Spellpack's dictionary comes in two parts: the core dictionary has 15,000 words whilst the user dictionary is empty ready for your own words to be added. Dictionary contents can be viewed and printed too. More details from Ariolasoft on 01-836 3411.

Timeworks for 128

Timeworks, one of America's leading producers of 64/128 software, has set up shop in Britain and has released U.K. versions of its acclaimed disk-based C-128 business programs. Packages on offer are the *Swiftcalc 128* spreadsheet, the *Data Manager 128* database, *Word Writer 128* and *Sideways*. They all work in 128 mode and can be interfaced with each other to form a complete system.

The spreadsheet, database and wordprocessor will cost £60 each, with Sideways coming in at £35. Sideways (as the name suggests) lets you print out a complete spreadsheet horizontally on paper — the text is rotated 90 degrees. It also has a variety of type sizes. We're all set to review them next month.



Graph Paper

Ariolasoft must be convinced that the 64 has a glowing future in business. Yet another package it's imported from the States is *B/Graph*, described as a professional graphics-charting and statistical analysis program. Use it in sales, marketing and general administration to impress customers or your boss.

B/Graph offers a wide variety of graph types, including bar, segmented bar, point, line and pie charts. It also supports popular printers like the Epson, Star, NEC and Okidata range. All in all, this has to rank as one of the better graphics packages for the 64 and is well worth a look, especially at the price of £29.95.

BUSINESS NEWS

O.K. Quiz Time!

1 Where can you find over 100 **FREE** software programs a year?

2 Who can you go to for **FREE** round the clock advice and help?

3 How can you get instant news, views, gossip and "hands on" reviews **24 hours a day?**

4 Who gives you **FREE** national electronic mail?

5 Where can you "chat" with 70,000 other micro users?

6 Who'll help you publish your own database for all to see?

7 How can you take part in national multi-user strategy games?

8 How can you book a seat on the 3.15 from Euston—at midnight?

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Age________ Micro________

CU 7/86

Insult Construction Set!!***

Thought up any good insults lately? If you've ever been stuck for a few sharpened words, a well-turned nasty phrase, then Fred Reid's Insult Construction Set is for you. Have fun offending as many people as you can, make loads of new enemies and, best of all, customise the program to suit your very own insulting needs.

for the Commodore 64, 128, 16 and Plus/4

by Fred Reid

Here it is, exclusive to *Commodore User*, your very own personal insult generator. Forget boring old Golf Construction Set, Pinball Construction Set, Adventure Construction Set — be really nasty with your very own Insult Construction Set.

ICS lets you generate not just words, but a whole sentence-ful of vile and nasty utterances. The program is simple: its databank contains four sections that combine to build up to 10,000 different insults — that should be enough to be getting along with.

And we've provided you with an alternative set of insults. So you can type in either Insult Set 1 or Insult Set 2 together with the Main Program. But you won't be able to use both sets in the same program.

If you want to customise your own insults, you'll find that the DATA statements are arranged in four groups, each with ten lines. These are the components that make up the eventual sentence. Simply put what you like in the appropriate sections.

Here's how the program works:

- Lines 20-140 these contain the databank of phrases
- Lines 420-540 these print an introductory message on the screen and read the Data statements into an array (this makes all the parts easier for the computer to get at them)
- Lines 550-580 these produce the four random numbers needed to select the various parts of the insult
- Line 590 this adds all the parts together

The rest of the program is concerned with printing the insult on the screen tidily.



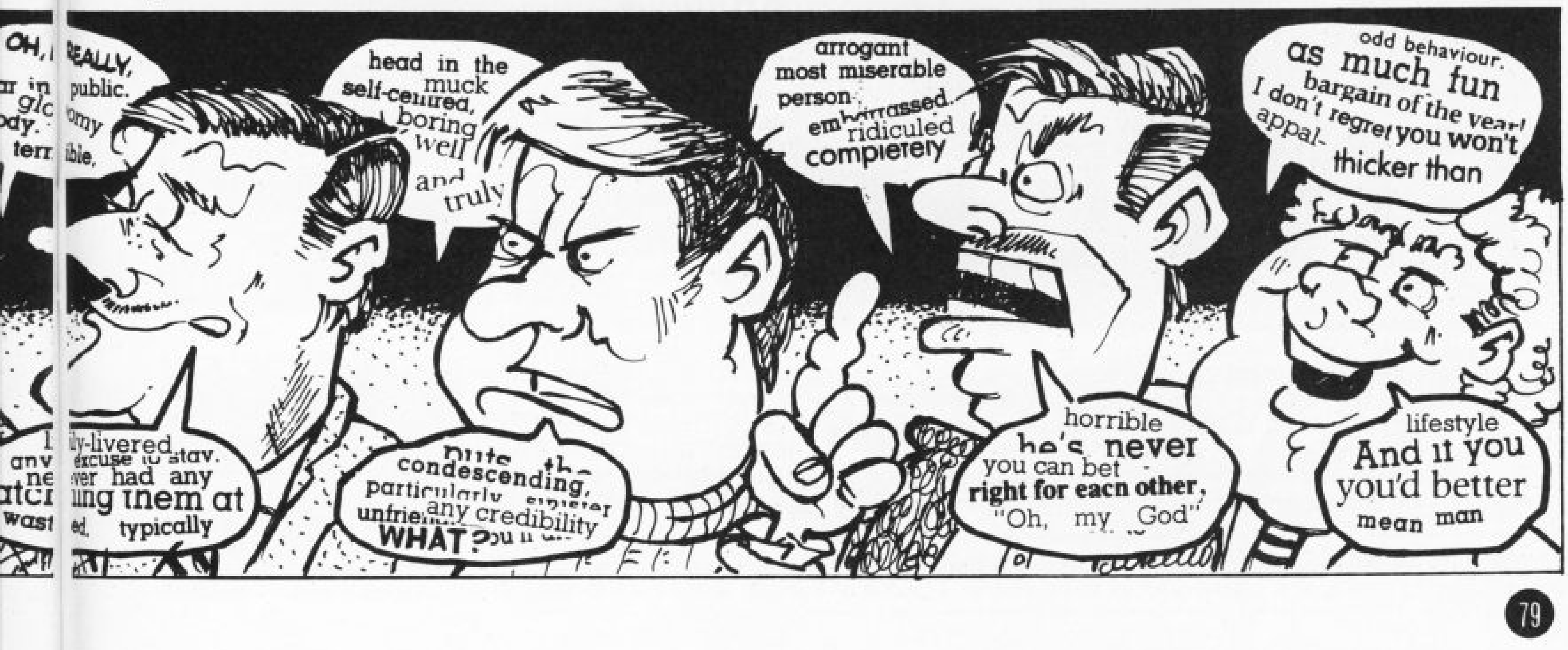
nstruction

```
10 DIMJ$(10,4)
420 POKE 53280,2:POKE53281,7:PRINT"(RED)"
430 PRINT"(CLR)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)BODGI
T AND SCARPER PRODUCTIONS"
440 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)*** PROUDL
Y PRESENT ***"
450 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)THE INCREDIBLE ALL PUR
POSE"
460 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)INSULT CONSTRUCT
ION KIT!"
470 PRINT"(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)NOW LISTEN PEA-BRAIN,
YOU'LL JUST"
480 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)HAVE TO WAIT A MINUTE!
"
500 FORK=1TO4:FORT=1TO10
510 READS$:FORH=1TOLEN(S$)
520 IFMID$(S$,H,1)="#"THENQ$=Q$+",":GOTO540
530 Q$=Q$+MID$(S$,H,1)
540 NEXTH:J$(T,K)=Q$+" ":Q$="":NEXTT,K
550 T1=INT(RND(TI)*10)+1
560 T2=INT(RND(TI)*10)+1
570 T3=INT(RND(TI)*10)+1
580 T4=INT(RND(TI)*10)+1
590 J$=J$(T1,1)+J$(T2,2)+J$(T3,3)+J$(T4,4)
1000 L=LEN(J$):LJ=0:S=1
1010 FORF=37TOLSTEP37
1020 GOSUB2000
1030 NEXTF
1050 PRINT"(CLR)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(GRN)"
1100 FORP=1TOS-1
1110 PRINTTAB(2)S$(P):PRINT:NEXTP
1120 PRINTTAB(2)RIGHT$(J$,L-LJ)
1130 PRINT"(HOME)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DO
WN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT
)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RED)PRESS SPACE FOR NEXT PHRASE"
1150 GETK$:IFK$=""THEN1150
1160 GOTO550
2000 IFMID$(J$,F,1)=" "THENS$(S)=MID$(J$,LJ+1,F-LJ):GOTO2020
2010 F=F-1:GOTO2000
2020 LJ=F:S=S+1:RETURN
```

MAIN PROGRAM

EASY ENTER

continued over ▶



Insult Set One

```
20 DATAWHY DON'T YOU
30 DATAI THINK YOU SHOULD
40 DATAI SUGEST YOU
50 DATALISTEN GORILLA FACE#
60 DATANOW LOOK HERE YOU EXCUSE FOR A MORON#
70 DATAIT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA IF YOU
80 DATAYOU COULD ALWAYS
90 DATAWHY NOT
100 DATASHUT IT DOG BREATH#
110 DATATHERE IS NO REASON WHY YOU CAN'T
120 DATA STOP BOTHERING ME AND
130 DATA GO AND
140 DATA LEAVE ME IN PEACE AND
150 DATA MAKE ME VERY HAPPY AND
160 DATA GO SOMEWHERE AND
170 DATA GET OUT OF MY LIFE AND
180 DATA DO SOMETHING MORE WORTHWHILE AND
190 DATA QUIT BUGGING ME AND
200 DATA GO AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE AND
210 DATA SOLVE ALL MY PROBLEMS AND
220 DATA JUMP UNDER
230 DATA DO AN IMPRESSION OF
240 DATA BE SICK OVER
250 DATA PLAY WITH
260 DATA SWALLOW
270 DATA DRINK
280 DATA MAKE AMOROUS ADVANCES TOWARDS
290 DATA TAKE THE MICKEY OUT OF
300 DATA SIT ON
310 DATA SERENADE
320 DATA A MOVING DOUBLE-DECKER BUS
330 DATA A POISONOUS SPIDER
340 DATA A STEAMROLLER
350 DATA AN UNEXPLODED BOMB
360 DATA TOWER BRIDGE
370 DATA A FALLING PIANO
380 DATA A CUCUMBER
390 DATA BARRY MANILOW'S NOSE
400 DATA A SINCLAIR SPECTRUM
410 DATA A PORCUPINE
```

Insult Set Two

```
20 DATACALL YOURSELF
30 DATAYOU RECKON YOU'RE
40 DATASO YOU THINK YOU'RE
50 DATAYOU CAN'T BE ALL THAT
60 DATADOES ANYBODY ELSE THINK YOU'RE
70 DATADO I THINK YOU'RE
80 DATADO YOU REALLY THINK YOU'RE
90 DATADO YOU EXPECT PEOPLE TO BELIEVE YOU'RE
100 DATAYOU?
110 DATADO YOU REALLY BELIEVE YOU'RE
120 DATA INTELLIGENT?
130 DATA GOOD LOOKING?
140 DATA FIT?
150 DATA RICH?
160 DATA STREETWISE?
170 DATA USEFUL?
180 DATA ATHLETIC?
190 DATA DYNAMIC?
200 DATA ADVENTUROUS?
210 DATA SUBTLE?
220 DATA I'VE SEEN BETTER BRAINS
230 DATA YOU GET MORE HAIR
240 DATA I BET THERE'S MORE MUSCLE
250 DATA I GET MORE EXCITEMENT
260 DATA I'VE SEEN MORE LIFE
270 DATA THERE'S MORE ACTION
280 DATA YOU GET AS MUCH ACTIVITY
290 DATA YOU'D GET MORE FUN
300 DATA YOU'D BE MORE USEFUL
310 DATA YOU SHOULD BE
320 DATA IN A BUTCHER'S WINDOW!
330 DATA ON A BILLIARD BALL!
340 DATA ON MY AUNTIE'S CAT!
350 DATA IN A MUSEUM!
360 DATA FROM A SQUEEZED PIMPLE!
370 DATA ON THE BBC!
380 DATA IN A FLOCK OF SHEEP!
390 DATA PLAYING 'MUD'
400 DATA WATCHING GOLF!
410 DATA ON EASTENDERS!
```

EASY ENTER

Our New Easy Enter system makes program entering even simpler. It works like this:

Control codes appear in plain English (always inside brackets). Just look them up in the list below. For example: (DOWN) means 'press the cursor down key'. We've included the graphic itself in the table so that you can check you've got it right.

Actual graphic characters are not changed and appear as they do on screen — you'll find them all printed on your keyboard.

Control Codes

(UP)	press cursor up key
(DOWN)	press cursor down key
(LEFT)	press cursor left key
(RGHT)	press cursor right key
(HOME)	press HOME key
(CLR)	press SHIFT/HOME
(INST)	press SHIFT/DELETE
(RVS)	reverse on
(OFF)	reverse off
(F1)etc	press function key indicated
($130)	flash on (16 and Plus/4)
($132)	flash off (16 and Plus/4)

Colour Codes

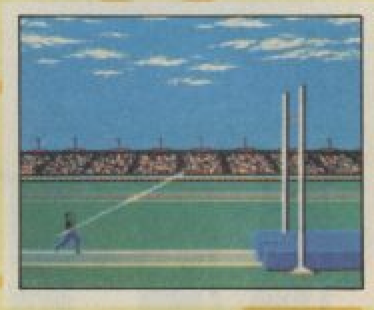
(BLK)	press CTRL and 1
(WHT)	press CTRL and 2
(RED)	press CTRL and 3
(CYN)	press CTRL and 4
(PUR)	press CTRL and 5
(GRN)	press CTRL and 6
(BLU)	press CTRL and 7
(YEL)	press CTRL and 8
(ORNG)	press CBM and 1
(BRN)	press CBM and 2
(LRED)	press CBM and 3
(GRY1)	press CBM and 4
(GRY2)	press CBM and 5
(LGRN)	press CBM and 6
(LBLU)	press CBM and 7
(GRY3)	press CBM and 8

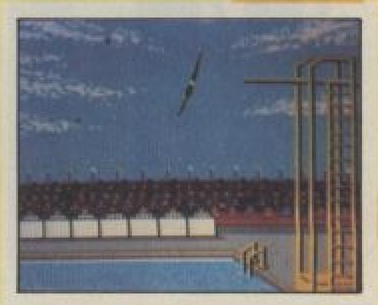
Note: secondary colours on the 16 and Plus/4 are slightly different to the above.

Sixteen ways to a Golden Summer.



SUMMER GAMES



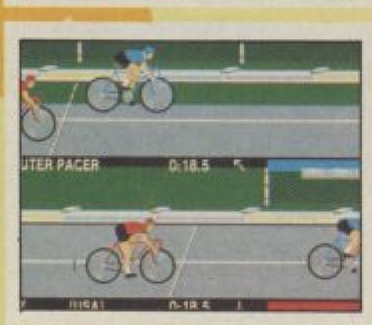


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- DIVING
- 4x400 METRE RELAY
- 100 METRE DASH
- SKEET SHOOTING
- GYMNASTICS
- 100 METRE FREESTYLE
- FREESTYLE RELAY



SUMMER GAMES II







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Commodore 64

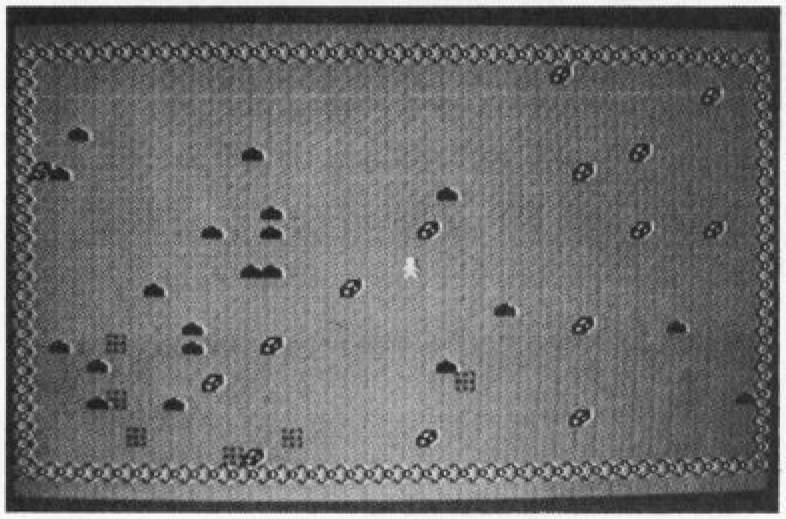
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EPYX
COMPUTER SOFTWARE

THE *WORLD'S* BIGGEST SELLING OLYMPIC SIMULATION

Here's a fast action treasure grabbing game for both 16 and Plus/4 owners — type it in and you've got it for free.

Use your joystick (in port two) to manoeuvre your treasurehunter towards the ingots. Avoid the mines, the perimeter fence and the grids. When you've collected all the ingots, exit to the next screen by means of one of the grids.



MINEFIELD

by G. Vance — for the Commodore 16 and Plus/4

```
10 VOL8
20 COLOR0.6.5:COLOR4.6.4
30 FORT=14336TO14799
40 READA
50 POKET,A
60 NEXTT
70 DATA126.129.189.177.177.189.129.126
80 DATA124,254,198,198,254,254,198,198
90 DATA252,254,198,252,254,198,254,252
100 DATA124,254,198,192,192,198,254,124
110 DATA248,252,206,198,198,206,252,248
120 DATA254,254,192,252,252,192,254,254
130 DATA254,254,192,252,252,192,192,192
140 DATA124,254,192,222,222,198,254,124
150 DATA198,198,198,254,254,198,198,198
160 DATA254,254,24,24,24,24,254,254
170 DATA254,254,24,24,24,216,248,112
180 DATA198,204,216,240,240,216,204,198
190 DATA192,192,192,192,192,192,254,254
200 DATA198,238,254,214,198,198,198,198
210 DATA198,230,246,254,254,222,206,198
220 DATA124,254,198,198,198,198,254,124
230 DATA252,254,198,254,252,192,192,192
240 DATA124,254,198,214,222,206,254,124
250 DATA252,254,198,254,252,216,204,198
260 DATA124,254,192,252,126,6,254,124
270 DATA254,254,24,24,24,24,24,24
280 DATA198,198,198,198,198,198,254,124
290 DATA198,198,198,198,198,108,56,16
300 DATA198,198,198,214,214,214,254,108
310 DATA130,198,108,56,56,108,198,130
320 DATA102,102,102,126,60,24,24,24
330 DATA254,254,14,28,56,112,254,254
340 DATA56,56,56,0,0,56,56,56
350 DATA0,0,0,0,24,60,60,24
360 DATA129,66,24,36,36,24,66,129
370 DATA0,0,0,24,126,255,255,255
380 DATA219,153,0,219,219,0,153,219
390 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
400 DATA0,31,35,69,249,138,140,248
410 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
420 DATA28,28,8,28,42,8,20,34
430 DATA98,84,199,20,117,74,102,44
440 DATA0,1,3,43,85,234,255,127
450 DATA126,36,36,194,199,255,255,254
460 DATA153,153,153,153,153,153,153,153
470 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
480 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
490 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
500 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
510 DATA0,0,0,0,12,12,24,48
520 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
530 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
540 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
550 DATA0,124,198,198,198,198,124,0
560 DATA0,24,56,120,24,24,254,0
570 DATA0,124,134,6,124,192,254,0
580 DATA0,124,134,60,6,134,124,0
590 DATA0,192,216,216,254,24,24,0
600 DATA0,254,192,252,6,134,124,0
610 DATA0,124,192,252,198,198,124,0
620 DATA0,254,6,12,24,48,48,0
630 DATA0,124,198,124,198,198,124,0
640 DATA0,124,198,198,126,6,124,0
650 POKE65298,PEEK(65298)AND251:POKE65299,56
660 SCNCLR
```

```
670 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGH
T)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(BLK)MINEFIELD"
680 PRINT"(DOWN)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)THE OBJECT OF THE GAME IS TO MOVE"
690 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)YOUR MAN (WHT)#(BLK) AROUND THE MINEFIEL
D"
700 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)PICKING UP TREASURE (YEL)!(BLK) AND AVOIDING"
710 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)THE ELECTRIFIED FENCE (BLK)]]](BLK) AND THE"
720 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGH
T)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)MINES (BRN)↑(BLK) £"
730 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)TO ESCAPE THE MINEFIELD MOVE YOUR"
740 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)FIGURE ONTO ONE OF THE EXITS (LGRN)←(BLK
) "
750 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)YOU WILL THEN BE TRANSPORTED TO "
760 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)ANOTHER MINEFIELD WITH ONE LESS "
770 PRINT"(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(RGHT)(DOWN)EXIT AND FIVE MORE MIN
ES£"
780 E=6:M=20:G=15:P=3572:D=1:SC=0:LI=3
790 FORT=0TO39:POKET+3072,29:POKET+4032,29:NEXTT
800 FORT=0TO24:POKE3072+T*40,29:POKE3072+39+T*40,29:NEXTT
810 GETKEYA$
820 SCNCLR
830 FORT=0TO39:POKET+3112,29:POKET+3992,29:NEXTT
840 FORT=1TO23:POKE3072+T*40,29:POKE3072+39+T*40,29:NEXTT
850 FORT=1TOE
860 L=INT(RND(1)*850)+80+3072
870 IFPEEK(L)=32THENPOKEL,31:POKEL-1024,77:NEXTT
880 IFT<ETHENIFPEEK(L)<>32THENGOTO860
890 FORR=1TOM
900 K=INT(RND(1)*850)+80+3072
910 IFPEEK(K)=32THENPOKEK,30:POKEK-1024,9:NEXTR
920 IFR<MTHENIFPEEK(K)<>32THENGOTO900
930 FORT=1TOG
940 K=INT(RND(1)*850)+80+3072
950 IFPEEK(K)=32THENPOKEK,33:POKEK-1024,8:NEXTT
960 IFT<GTHENIFPEEK(K)<>32THENGOTO940
965 POKEP-1024,113:POKEP,35
966 FORY=1TO50:J=INT(RND(1)*900)+60:SOUND1,J,1:SOUND1,J-30,1:NEXTY
970 POKEP-1024,113:POKEP,35
980 PRINT"(HOME)LIVES[";LI,"SCORE[";SC
990 SOUND1,P-3072,2:SOUND2,P-3072,2
1000 GETA$:IFA$=""THEN1050
1010 IFA$="3"THEND=1
1020 IFA$="4"THEND=2
1030 IFA$="W"THEND=3
1040 IFA$="A"THEND=4
1050 IFD=1THENPOKEP,32:P=P-40
1060 IFD=2THENPOKEP,32:P=P+1
1070 IFD=3THENPOKEP,32:P=P+40
1080 IFD=4THENPOKEP,32:P=P-1
1090 IFPEEK(P)=29ORPEEK(P)=30THEN1130
1100 IFPEEK(P)=33THENSC=SC+10:FORT=8TO1STEP-1:VOLT:SOUND1,900,1:SOUND2,900,1:VOL
8:NEXTT
1110 IFPEEK(P)=31THENSCNCLR:M=M+5:E=E-1:SC=SC+100:GOTO820
1120 GOTO970
1130 REMEND
1140 POKEP,36:FORA=1TO15:POKEP-1024,66:POKEP-1024,72:POKEP-1024,71:NEXTA:LI=LI-1
1145 FORT=8TO0STEP-0.5:VOLT:SOUND3,1015,4:NEXTT:VOL8
1150 IFLI=<0THEN1170
1160 POKEP,32:P=3572:GOTO820
1170 SCNCLR
1180 CHAR1,18,16,"(WHT)#"
1190 FORD=0TO39:POKE3752+D,33:POKE2728+D,8:NEXTD
1200 FORT=0TO15:SOUND1,T*66,5:SOUND2,T*66,5
1210 CHAR1,18,T," '"
1220 CHAR1,18,T+1,"%&"
1230 FORP=1TO25:NEXTP
1240 NEXTT
1241 FORY=8TO0STEP-0.03:VOLY:SOUND3,600,1:NEXTY:VOL8
1250 PRINT"(BLK)(DOWN)(DOWN)(LEFT)(LEFT)(LEFT)(LEFT)(LEFT)(LEFT)(LEFT)(LEFT)(LEF
T)(LEFT)(LEFT)(LEFT)HIT ANY KEY TO PLAY AGAIN"
1251 FORQ=1TO500:NEXTQ
1260 GETKEYA$
1270 GOTO650
```

EASY ENTER


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The fate of mankind is in your hands
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Multimodem—64

Miracle's 64 Multimodem has been a long time getting BABT approval, a great pity since it's one of the most advanced 64 specific modems around. Now that you can use it without breaking the law, we thought it was time for a detailed look at its many features.

For those unfamiliar with the name, Miracle Technology are the people behind the WS2000 and WS3000 range of professional modems. Many of the features previously only found on such 'professional' modems appear in the Multimodem's specification, including autodial and auto answer, selectable baud rates, and mailbox facilities. Before I get carried away, let's take a look at exactly what you get for your money.

The 64 Multimodem costs £116.15 including VAT and delivery. For that you get the modem itself, a ten pound voucher towards the cost of a Micronet subscription a directory of U.K. bulletin boards.

Probably the biggest advantage of this over any other comms package is that all the software you are likely to need is included on ROM, thus obviating the need to load extra programs from disk as and when you need them. With the Multimodem plugged in you're set up for just about anything. The only database you can't access is Compunet. Incidentally, the software was written by Y2 Computing, authors of much of the 64 comms software to be found on Compunet and Micronet.

Options

Switch on your 64 with the



Multimodem in place and you will be presented with the main menu screen. All functions are accessed by calling up sub-menus from this main screen. To briefly run through them the options are:

Dial Directory: loads from disk a directory of your most frequently used databases and Bulletin Boards (BB's) created with a Basic program supplied in the manual.

Load Additional Features: For future facilities which will be provided on disk.

Execute Additional Features: As above.

Disk Mode: For a directory and DOS commands.

Viewdata Mode: To access Micronet and other Viewdata based BBs like The Gnome at Home and Metrotel.

Select Devices: Configures the modem for your particular printer and disk drive/cassette set up.

Terminal mode: For calling up other BBs such as those which operate on 300/300 or 1200/75 Baud scrolling format. Rather than go into detail about each of these options — which would take some time — I'll concentrate on those which you're most likely to want to make use of. This doesn't mean the others are extranneous — they're there if you need them.

The first thing I did with the Multimodem was to call up Micronet 800. Pressing F5 takes you into Viewdata mode and it's then simply a matter of pressing F1, keying in the number of the nearest Prestel computer and logging on in the usual fashion.

There are a number of other facilities on the viewdata menu you can make use of whilst offline. Using the F4 and F5 keys in combination allows you to call up a disk directory and examine previously saved pages or mailboxes. Mailboxes can be created offline for later transmission — no point in spending hours creating visual masterpieces while running up your phone bill. The Multimodem also permits full use of ESC codes to generate fancy graphics like double-height flashing letters in any of the 64's 15 colours.

Micronet and more

One of the most useful applications of the offline mailbox preparation facility (apart from preparing mailboxes) is that you can use it to log on to Micronet, download frames, or your mailboxes, and then log off. This is done by placing all the relevant page numbers and control codes in a mailbox and sending it as soon as you are logged on, saving considerable connect time and money.

A number of useful facilities can be called up while you are online. Most important is probably the download function which allows you to load 64 software from Micronet 800. A hard copy of the current screen can be produced if you have a printer, although this takes a while, so it's probably a good idea to save to disk and print it out once you've logged off. A disk directory can be viewed whilst online which is extremely useful if you've forgotten the name of the mailbox you were about to transmit.

Should you tire of Micronet 800, or simply want to look at something off the beaten track you can make use of terminal mode. This allows you to contact bulletin boards operating on 1200/75 and 300/300 baud. Having selected one of these you must configure your system for the correct parity, local echo and line feeds. Most amateur BBs operate no parity and supply line feeds, but it's often very much a matter of trial and error.

For adventureous types the Multimodem also has auto answer which means you can set up your own BB. This has to be the most exciting development yet in 64 comms. Initially the software was quite basic. All it did was answer the phone, send a message to the caller and send their message to your printer — a kind of digital answerphone. Y2 have now produced a revised version of the ROM which enables you to set up your own mini database. If you already have an early version of the modem, send it back to Miracle Technology and they will upgrade it free of charge.

Anyone considering making the move into comms couldn't have picked a better time. At the price, the 64 Multimodem offers more than any previously available Commodore modem. Now that it has received BABT approval it will undoubtedly rank high, if not top of any self respecting Commodore user's shopping list.

Ken McMahon

- **64 Multimodem**
- **Miracle Technology 0473 216141**
- **Price: £116.15**

Going to

by Bohdan Buciak

Print Shop reviewed

There'll come a time when you want to do more than just print text with your 64 and printer. Precision's Print Shop lets your printer show what it can do: churning out greetings cards, personal stationary, signs and huge banners. And it's so easy to use.

Reviewers raved about Broderbund's *Print Shop* when it first appeared in America last year. Now it's arrived (at long last) in the UK, courtesy of Precision Software — and there's still nothing to touch it.

Print Shop is simply a brilliant utility for the Commodore 64/128 that lets you print a large range of useful stationary. But to use it, you'll need not only a disk drive but one of the specified printers and interface adaptors.

Luckily, the list is large and includes Commodore's 1525 and MPS 801 models (not the 1526 or MPS 802), *Star*, Epson, and *Mannesman Tally* machines. Interfaces supported include *Grappler*, *Tymac Connection*, *Cardco*, and *Xetec* devices. If you've got any of these, you should have no problems.

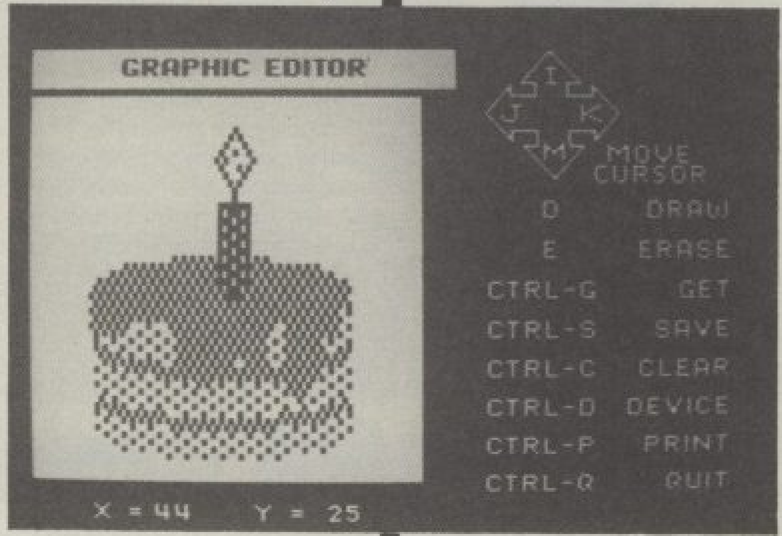
Print Shop lets your printer do things it never thought possible. The main menu shows the six major options:

- **Greetings Card** — forget Gordon Fraser, make your own card on an A4 sheet of paper which, when folded, gives a design on the front, a message inside and a credit (to yourself) on the back.
- **Sign** — print any sign you like on a full A4 sheet, using text and graphics.
- **Letterhead** — mix text and graphics to design personal A4 stationary. You can have text at the bottom of the page too.
- **Banner** — prints very large letters horizontally to let you create a banner of unlimited length on continuous stationary. You can have graphics in the text or at either end. "England for the World Cup" no problem.
- **Screen Magic** — perhaps the least useful. The program generates those corny kaleidoscopic effects which you can freeze at any point, type a message across it and print it out normally or in reverse video.



Lettering can be small, large, outline or 3-D.

Print Shop's graphic character editor lets you play around with the graphics supplied or design your own.



- **Graphic Editor** — design your own graphics if you don't like the set provided.

To achieve all these marvellous feats Print Shop gives you a set of 50 graphics, 10 background patterns, 8 border patterns and 8 different fonts.

You can see all the graphics on the printed reference card provided, and there's something there for all occasions: like musical instruments, animals, birds, champagne, a Santa, heart, birthday cake, even a wreath. You'll either love them or think them too 'cute' for words.

The eight fonts follow the same middle-of-the-road style, ranging from *Alexia* (lots of squiggles) and *Tech* (pseudo computer) to *Stencil* and *Typewriter*. For borders there's a choice of line thicknesses, hearts, flowers, beads etc. That lot may not impress you, but your Auntie Freda will love them.



Useful if you're having turkey for dinner — but there's no graphic for roast beef, or leg of lamb . . . .

Using Print Shop

Print Shop is beautifully programmed and entirely menu driven, taking you step by step through creating your designs. A 'back' key is always available to let you correct mistakes, and there's even a HELP key. In fact, it's so easy you needn't bother with the manual — who does, anyway?

For Greetings Cards and Signs, you start by choosing a border design, then the graphic and finally the text.

Stick this on your bedroom door and be the envy of your friends?



print



◀ Scare away burglars with a custom sign?



Mix text and Kaleidoscopic effects in the Screen Magic section. ▲

Computerised Valentine card for modern lovers. ▼



Only one graphic can appear but you have a choice of three sizes and various layouts. So you could have a pattern of repeated graphics or just one large one slap bang in the middle.

Text can be written and arranged in three sizes with options for solid characters, outline or 3-D. Sizes and style can be mixed on the same card or sign, but the amount of text available depends on the font you choose — some are bigger than others.

Sadly, you can't actually see the finished design before printing it out, so perfectionists will end up modifying and printing it again.

The Letterhead option works in the same way except that type sizes are fixed. You get a large first line with three lines of smaller text underneath for the address. The graphic (fixed size) can appear on the left, the right or repeat straight across the top.

Creating Banners is the most fun of all. Again, all the fonts and graphics are available but only in one size — extra large. Simply choose your graphic, its position and type out your text. Sections can be 'chained' together to let you mix different fonts and graphics. But don't go for a 30 foot banner if you're in a hurry.

Finally, there's the Graphics Editor section which lets you draw and save to disk your own designs for use instead of the ready-made graphics. You can also call up and modify the ready-mades — put a few more candles on the custom birthday cake perhaps?

Sadly, this section is a little rudimentary, offering none of the usual facilities like box, circle, block move and copy. But it does let you use Koala Pad instead of keyboard or joystick input.

Personal stationary is a cinch with Print Shop, and you can include any of the graphics supplied on disk. ▼



Is it for you?

Print Shop is incredibly good fun but, being an American import, it doesn't come cheap at £44.95. You'll need to use it a lot to justify the money. So it looks like being more suitable to clubs, associations and societies rather than the home.

Trouble is, the graphics are intended for home use and you might not like the florid and twee style of presentation you tend to get. So you'll need to make good use of the graphics editor if you're thinking of using it professionally.

Lastly, printing is very slow even with fairly quick printers. The head doesn't skip over blank space, nor does it print bi-directionally. Added to that, the computer has to stop and 'think' occasionally which also temporarily hangs up the printer.

The results are worth waiting for but don't try making multiple copies, even though there's a facility provided. Take photostats of your original. And if you're printing a long banner, don't even contemplate it if you're in a hurry. A really large one could take a good half hour.

Conclusions

Print Shop should have arrived in the UK ages ago. It's a genuinely unique program that's great fun, practical and very easy to use. Why can't all utilities be like this?

It's only snag is the price; it's a luxury that only the better off families will be able to afford. But if you've already got all the hardware it needs and a genuine use for it, forking out the readies may not hurt too much. □

- **Print Shop Commodore 64/128**
- **Precision Software tel: 01-883 4406**
- **Price: £44.95 (disk only)**



Evesham Micros

THE UTILITY SPECIALISTS

Quickdisc+

FAST LOAD PLUS UTILITY CARTRIDGE

After enjoying considerable success since its release we have now made some improvements to "QUICKDISC+" to maintain its position as the best value in the disc "speed up/utility" cartridges.

Fast LOAD (now 5-7 times normal speed). Works with majority of protected software. Can be switched in and out from the keyboard.

Fast SAVE at 7 times normal speed.

Fast Format takes just 20 seconds.

Fast Backup copies an entire disc in four minutes (not protected software).

Very Fast File Copier for selective file copying at HIGH speed. Now handles files up to **248 blocks** long.

Improved DOS commands (DOS 5.1) makes for easy use of the disc drive. eg. $(RETURN) will LOAD and display a directory without overwriting BASIC. SHIFT RUN/STOP will LOAD "0:*",8,1 etc. **Very, very useful.**

Incorporates Centronics printer software (user port) **with CBM graphics** capability (requires user port centronics cable).

A RESET switch is fitted. (We have found this to be "unstoppable", it even preserves the tape buffer).

NO MEMORY IS USED by this cartridge, it is totally "transparent" and uses special switching techniques.

"128" and 1570 compatible in '64 mode.

PLUS MANY MORE USEFUL FEATURES TO MAKE YOUR 1541 FAR MORE FRIENDLY TO OPERATE.

ONLY £19.95

When reviewing "Quickdisc+" Commodore Horizons said: **"A MUST FOR EVERY 1541 OWNER".**

NOW EVEN FASTER

DISC DISECTOR V4.0

Disc-Disector

Now the **fourth generation** of the country's **leading** disc back-up/utility package is available. Various improvements have been incorporated to re-establish "Disc Disector" as the **ultimate weapon.** Of particular importance are the following.

"EVESHAM 3 MINUTE NIBBLER" is the **latest version** of the infamous "Evesham Nibbler" now boasting **even more power and speed. Will now copy even the most highly protected discs in 3-4 minutes.** Handles the latest types of disc protection **completely automatically.** At the time of going to press this program copied **virtually every disc program available for testing including the latest in games and business software.** (It even copies '128 format or discs in CPM mode on the '128).

"DUAL DRIVE NIBBLER" allows the use of two drives to make **even faster back-ups.** Incorporates device number change software so no hardware mods necessary.

"NOVA TRANSFER" will **transfer to disc** the latest Nova Load programs including **multi part loaders.** A very useful utility that also includes routines to transfer "Summer Games II" and "Beach-Head II" to disc.

"DISCO" will transfer standard speed load software to disc.

"TRANS QD" allows you to save a fast load system to your own discs.

"DOUBLE BACK UP" is a **very fast** two drive back up.

As well as these important newcomers all the old favourite utilities which have helped earn "Disector" such a large following are included. These include **Menu Maker (selective), Fast Format, Unscratch, Disc Monitor, Disc Orderly, Fast File Copy, Index, etc. etc.**

The whole package is menu driven and has its own fast boot system built in for your convenience. Pays for itself the first day your receive it.

ONLY £29.95

Customers with earlier versions may return them along with a payment of £9.95 to receive V4.0

All programs are CBM 128 and 1570/71 compatible in '64 mode.

FREEZE FRAME

THE NEW GENERATION OF BACKUP METHODS IS NOW EVEN BETTER

THE LAST WORD IN BACKUP TECHNOLOGY

"Freeze Frame" has enjoyed **incredible success** for the past few months. Sales both in the U.K. and abroad have been very good and **thousands of satisfied customers** are using them.

Continual development has enabled us to launch an **improved version** of the product that incorporates a few useful improvements **PLUS** it is **even more powerful.** At the time of going to press our **thorough testing could not find one single, memory resident, program that "Freeze Frame" could not handle.** (This includes **ALL** the latest software up to 4th May 1986).

OPERATING "FREEZE FRAME"

"Freeze frame" is simplicity itself to use. It is cartridge based so is simply plugged into the cartridge port. When the computer is switched on a message is displayed, pressing "RETURN" will clear the computer back to the normal start up screen. Software can now be loaded from tape or disc **completely as normal.** The latest version of "Freeze Frame" will, to the best of our knowledge, allow **ANY software** to load and run normally (unlike competitive products).

"Freeze Frame" can be brought into operation at any convenient point by pressing the button on it. You can then do one of three things:—

1. **Pressing "D" will save a working version of the program in memory to a formatted disc. This version will include a high speed reload.**
2. **Pressing "S" will do the same as "D" except that the reload will be at standard 1541 load speed. (Also suitable for U.S. spec. machines, 4040 drives, some fast load systems etc.)**
3. **Pressing "T" will save a working version of the program in memory to tape. This incorporates a high speed reload at approx. 2400 baud.**

THAT IS IT!!

ALL PROGRAMS SAVED WITH "FREEZE FRAME" CAN BE RELOADED INDEPENDANTLY OF THE UTILITY

WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT FREEZE FRAME IS THE MOST POWERFUL AND FLEXIBLE BACKUP SYSTEM IN THE WORLD.

Does any other utility offer all this?

TAPE TO DISC — DISC TO TAPE
DISC TO DISC — DISC TO TAPE

PLUS the added flexibility of being able to save at any stage and return to that position, because programs restart from the point where the button is pressed.

An awe inspiring success rate.
Customise programs by putting in POKEs for endless lives etc. and then save with those active.
Reload independant of the cartridge.
Available now.

"FREEZE FRAME" HAS NO SERIOUS COMPETITION.

COMPETITIVE PRODUCTS

A successful product always spawns imitators and "Freeze Frame" is certainly no exception. Fortunately for us, but perhaps not for the people who have purchased them, their main similarity seems to be in advertising style.

"The Final Cartridge" is a good product in many ways. **BUT** when it comes to making backups it is just not in the same class as "Freeze Frame". Another major drawback, not made clear by advertising is that saved programs can **ONLY be reloaded with the cartridge in situ.**

"UPC1" has its uses but in its current form **cannot be taken seriously** as competition for "Freeze Frame".

"ACTION REPLAY" has no tape save, puts 8 files on a disc save and contrary to their claims we have found many programs that it can't handle.

ONLY £39.95

Owners of earlier versions can return them and upgrade for £14.95

SERIOUS WARNING. THIS IS AN EXTREMELY POWERFUL PRODUCT AND IS STRICTLY FOR PERSONAL USE. DON'T COMPARE IT WITH ANY OTHER PRODUCT. NOTHING ELSE OFFERS THE POWER OF "FREEZE FRAME".

QUIET DRIVE STOPS

This package incorporates new drive stops for **two 1541s** that will **end for good** the dreaded "woodpecker". The fitting process is very easy and a test program is provided to check the fitment. Helps prevent future alignment problems and makes your drive purr with satisfaction.

ONLY £4.95

DOUBLER

The tape back up "device"

Doubler has been an **enormous success** and continues to sell very well. Why? Because it is the **best product of its type** on the market. Doubler uses a unique method that copies **all types of software** regardless of speed. It consists of **hardware and software**. The software is the key part as unlike other products of its type Doubler creates a **brand new machine copy**. It is very easy to use and very successful. In fact our tests **have proved** that this "device" can achieve **100% success**.

Requires access to two data recorders.

ONLY £12.95

Why settle for less—this is the best.

ODDS AND ENDS

STAR NL10C The best Commodore ready printer, many features including 120cps draft mode, 27cps near letter quality, tractor and friction feed with semi automatic single sheet feed, most functions front panel switch selectable but perhaps most importantly the **interface cartridge is replaceable.** So if you change to another make of computer you simply purchase a new interface to suit. **ONLY £269.00**

DISC NOTCHER Allows you to easily cut a second write protect notch in your discs so that you can use both sides. A very useful gadget. **ONLY £6.95**

AZIMATE 3000 Lets you realign the head of your data cassette quickly and easily. Supplied with suitable screwdriver. **ONLY £6.95**

3M DISKETTES The best quality discs, available from us at the price of cheap ones. Buy the best, they last a lifetime. Boxes of ten—

SINGLE SIDE/DOUBLE DENSITY	**£11.95**
DOUBLE SIDE/DOUBLE DENSITY	**£13.95**
OR PACKED IN A PLASTIC LIBRARY CASE	
SINGLE SIDE/DOUBLE DENSITY	**£12.95**
DOUBLE SIDE/DOUBLE DENSITY	**£14.95**

COMMODORE COMPATIBLE DATA RECORDER Performs the same operations as the C2N or 1531 but a useful saving. Also includes a pause button (if for use with C16/PLUS4 please state) **ONLY £29.95**

AND THEN THERE WAS DOLPHIN DOS

THE DIFFERENCE IS *STAGGERING*

Like everyone that has had the pleasure of seeing this system in operation you will be amazed by both the speed and ease of use. It is compatible with the majority of commercial software, speeding up both the program loading and SEQ/REL files. Fitting requires the insertion of two sub assembly boards, one in the 1541 and one in the '64/'128. This does not normally entail soldering, although a small amount will be necessary with some machines.

ONLY £69.95

If you require further information please send SAE for fact sheet.

Operates with the CBM 64 or 128 in '64 mode with 1541 disc drive.

THE FEATURES

25x FASTER LOADING (PROGRAM FILES)
12x FASTER SAVING (PROGRAM FILES)
10x FASTER LOADING (SEQUENTIAL FILES)
8x FASTER SAVING (SEQUENTIAL FILES)
3x FASTER LOAD AND SAVE (RELATIVE)
(These figures do not allow for searching)
Easy DOS commands from function keys.
Fast formats 40 tracks giving 749 blocks free.
Centronics driver software inbuilt.
Machine code monitor.
Can be switched out if necessary.

SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. ALL ORDERS DESPATCHED THE WORKING DAY AFTER RECEIPT

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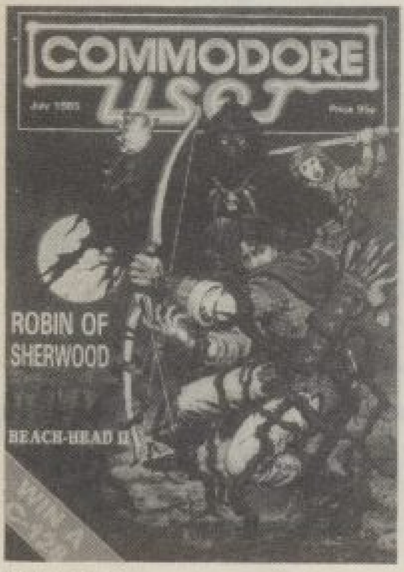
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Amiga News; Robin of Sherwood Exclusive; Profile of Ultimate; Screen Stars reviewed: Exploding Fist, Beach-Head II; Gates of Dawn mapped.



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OCTOBER '85
Rambo — The making of the game; Black Wyche, Nexus, Zorro + McGuigan vs Bruno — The Big Fight; hacking into M.U.D.; Key In 'Sub Attack'; Top 10 Word Processors.

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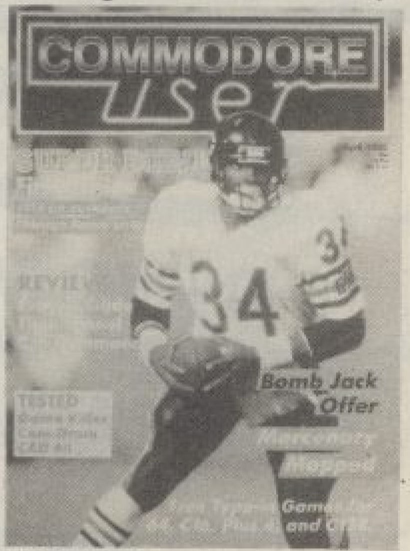
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MARCH '86
128D Launch Story; Yie Ar Kung Fu Screen Star; Reviews of Eidolan, Hardball Dragon Skulle, Zoids, Back to the Future, Uridium; O level Revision Packages; Monitor round up.



APRIL '86
Super Bowl Review; Mercenary Mapped; Screen Star Starship Andromeda; Paper Boy Preview; C16 Games Roundup; Integrated Business Programs.

NEXT

Fun! in the Sun

Slap some suntan oil on, pull the ring off a can of coke, and collapse into the nearest deckchair for a sizzling mid-Summer read. Our red-hot August issue is packed full of goodies.

Play to Win

Our tipsters have been busy playing *Ghosts and Goblins*, *Biggles*, *Tau Ceti* as well as all the latest C16/Plus/4 games. Don't miss their tips next month, and every month.

Screen Scene

Next month's biggie is likely to be *Infiltrator* from U.S. Gold. We'll have a full review plus *Time Trax*, *Way of the Tiger*, *Knight Games*, *Samantha Fox's Strip Poker*, *Winter Games* for the C16, Plus/4 *Mercenary* and many more in this mid-summer bumper Screen Scene. Don't you dare miss this one.

C.E.S. Show Report

The big American games houses have been showing off their wares in Chicago this month. Dan Gutman journeyed west to the windy city to check them out.

Business

If you use Superbase you will find out our Get More From feature on the database invaluable. Plus reviews of Timeworks 128 packages — America's best selling business packages.

Type-ins

If you haven't got the cash then type in a listing. Our type-ins are getting better all the time. One of our former C16 games has even been released by a software house as a full price job — *Baby Berks*.

Tried and Tested

We take a long hard look at Newsroom — the latest print utility from Ariolasoft that will enable you to publish your own magazine. We also check out Script Plus — a high quality, cartridge-based word processor for the C16 and Plus/4.

Plus

There are also competitions, all the latest news in Buzz including the full story on the new 64, Into the Valley, Tommy's Tips, loony Uncle Jim, and all the filth that 'they' don't want you to know about in Hot Shots. It's one hell of an issue, it's on sale on June 26th, it's a give-away at a quid, and if you don't want to miss it ask your newsagent to keep one back for you now. Another way of making sure of your CU every month is to take out a subscription. The time is right to do this as we have a special offer on back issues to all new subscribers. See page 89 for details.

MONTH


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TALLADEGA U.S. GOLD

Uncle Jim's Commodore Club

Uncle Jim's taken time off from DIY computer maintenance to do some adventure playing. All has not gone to plan, though.

My nephew Trevor gave me a copy of Tolsoft's *War and Peace* adventure the other day. He's stuck at the point where Prince Dimitri gets confronted by a group of cossacks outside a fishmongers. I told him I'd read it and would be able to work it out in no time, but that wasn't quite true, I'd only watched an episode of the television series made a few years back.

Anyway after two days on it I was going mad, my head was full of Bulgars, wheatfields and women called Anna. The final straw was a nightmare I had after a late session the other night.

I dreamt that I was in a Hotel room in St Petersburg, room number 473 and I was carrying a cheeseburger, a stuffed walrus and a trouser press. There was a really useful-looking pistol on the floor, but I couldn't pick it up unless I put one of the other things down. I was wondering which to get rid of, when a wizended little dwarf sidled up to me, "Psst!"

"Who are you?" I asked.

"I am the Count Krapp of Xxandor," he replied, "and you are Uncle Jim of Commodore User and I claim my five pounds."

"Five pounds!" I exclaimed. "You must be joking!"

"Right," he said, kicking my ankle. "Just for that, you forfeit three objects of my choosing," and with a cackle he made his exit.

So there I was in room 473 with a stuffed walrus, wondering what the hell to do when the walrus started speaking!

"Hello," it said. "My name is Walter Petrovich, and you'd better give me a herring or I'll do something really nasty to you."

I dropped the walrus and fled down the hall only to find that I had no clothes on. Just as I was about to run back into room 473 I was arrested by two guardsmen in drag. The next thing I knew I was in jail charged with assaulting a walrus and having an offensive body.

After a while I was able to make something of the gloomy surroundings. On the damp walls opposite was a key on a hook. I ran over to it, but naturally I couldn't reach it. I sat down again to puzzle it out when I heard a shout.

"Get off me you clumsy twit!" "Who are you?" I asked startled voice. "I'm Prince Dimitri," he replied. "Can't you remember any of the characters in this dream? I was captured outside a fishmongers in Moscow by a group of Cossacks for selling sprats out of season."

Anyway between the two of us we were able to climb up and get the key on the wall. It opened the door. We were just running down a passage when a large cannon ball made a hole in my stomach.

"Aaargh!" I shouted, and abruptly woke up in a state of total panic. I'd jumped out of bed, washed and dressed, hopped on my bike and was half way down the road before I noticed that it was still dark. Glancing at the radioactive luminous dial of my watch, I saw that it was only two in the morning, so I sneaked quietly home again, hoping to avoid embarrassment, only to find I'd locked myself out!

In my frustration I pushed the customised 64 doorbell, only to have it play me back the 1815 Overture. I gave up and made an early start for work. That'll teach me to stick to Horlicks and a Book at Bedtime!

However, one good thing came out of the whole gruesome experience, I had a great idea whilst I was standing outside the office waiting for it to open.

As I found recently with my computerised doorbell, it can be difficult to impress your friends by building your own peripherals if you are a



bit short of time or, indeed, expertise.

A useful dodge is to buy proper peripherals from a shop and disguise them as home-made ones. I fooled Ronnie the postman completely with my Squeezy bottle joystick, which consisted of a sawn-off detergent bottle placed over the handle of a Quickshot II. Other fake D.I.Y. add-ons include the Shoe Box Disk Drive, the Bar of Soap Mouse (be sure to use non-scented soap).

Perhaps the ultimate in deception, I thought as the sun rose over the building, would be the VIC 20 upgrade, in which you put all the guts from your Commodore 64 into a VIC 20 casing. I'm sure this modification would be popular among VIC users, and there must be quite a lot of money to be made by doing it.

The only snag is that to reduce costs you would need to sell a corresponding number of 64 downgrades, using the VIC components. Still, with a bit of imaginative advertising that shouldn't be a problem.

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AD INDEX

TOMMY'S TIPS

When it comes to answering your technical and programming queries, whether they're on the 64, 128, 16 or Plus/4, Tommy's your man. Go on, write to him: Tommy's Tips, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Screen Store

I am at the moment trying to write an adventure game for my 64. I would like to know if a hi-res picture is stored as data or if it is just dumped into memory. Many games have a lot of hi-res screens and since each takes up 8K how do they do this with only 38K basic or 54K machine code.
Andrew Paddon, Hants.

It is unlikely that they will be stored as DATA statements, since most hi-res screens in Adventure games are drawn using machine-code; Basic would take too long to draw an entire screen.

While it is perfectly possible to store several hi-res screens elsewhere in memory until needed, this is a very extravagent way of doing it, as you point out. What is often done is to either draw the screen directly onto the display (e.g. The Hobbit), or to draw only one or two screens in advance in another part of memory ready to be displayed when requested. Don't forget that some 'hi-res' screens are in fact very clever combinations of UDGs and Sprites which take up a lot less space in memory.

Down Under

I've got two problems for you concerning my Commodore 64. Firstly, is there a POKE or a program which will let me work on two programs at the same time? For example, could I store one program in memory whilst working on the other, and then get the first one back later?

Secondly, I sometimes see POKE 808,251 in a program to stop it from listing. My question is, can you break into such a program with a PEEK or POKE?
A. Pott, Melbourne, Australia.

There is indeed a way of storing two programs in memory at the same time. What you do is to write your program in the normal way using the normal start of Basic. Provided the first program does not occupy more than 12 kbytes of RAM you can move the start of Basic beyond the end of your first program simply by typing the following direct command: **POKE 44, 56: POKE 14336, 0 : NEW**.

You can now start writing the second program without affecting the first one in any way. To return to the first program again type **POKE 44, 8** (to go back to the second program, type **POKE 44, 56**). Once you have the two programs in memory you can only safely edit the second one, but they can both be saved quite separately, provided neither one has been run.

Programs can be loaded into the separate areas as well just as if each had the machine to itself. You have in effect split the memory in two giving half to each program and by altering the top of Basic (addresses 55 & 56) as well (eg to just below the start of the second program when running the first) you could actually have two totally independant programs and be able to run either.

If you leave the top of Basic where it is, then both programs will share the data/variables area which may be of use, but is more dangerous unless you want common data (in which case do not use RUN to start either program; use GOTO 10 instead). You can even have a small machine-code program in the C000 area which allows you to switch between the two programs using the function keys. The following program will do just that: (load and run it before writing/loading your required Basic programs).

```
10  PRINT "[CLR] M/C
    LOADER";
20  FOR A=49152 TO 49180
30  READ V: POKEA, V
40  T=T+V
50  NEXTA: IF T<>3620 THEN
    PRINT "CHECKSUM
    ERROR" : STOP
55  POKE 14336, 0
60  POKE 56334, 0 : POKE
    788, 0 : POKE 789, 192:
    POKE 56334, 1
70  PRINT "COMPLETED":
    PRINT
80  PRINT "F1 GIVES AREA
    2048 — 14334"
90  PRINT "F3 GIVES AREA
    14336 — 40959": END
100 DATA 234, 169, 4, 197,
    197, 240, 9, 169, 5, 197,
    197
110 DATA 240, 6, 76, 25, 192,
    169, 8, 76, 23, 192
120 DATA 169, 56, 133, 44,
    234, 76, 49, 234
```

Pressing f1 selects the lower area; f3 selects the higher area. If you have a disk drive it will also allow you to switch areas and load a directory without destroying the program in memory.

With regard to your second query, if the program can be halted than just type POKE 808,237 to restore the listing facility. If the program also autoruns then you will have to find a way to stop it first since you can't 'break-in' to a program that is running by using a POKE command.

Renumber

I have been writing a program on my 64 but have come across a problem. If I want to add something earlier in the program, I find that the sequence numbers are too close together e.g. 11, 12, 14, and I cannot fit my addition into the program. I overcame this problem by using GOSUB, RETURN's but on a listing the program is very messy and as it is for school I was wondering whether there was a command or program for re-sequence numbering a program (like there is on a BBC-B).
Barry Kendall, Lancs.

There is no simple command unfortunately, it has to be done by a program. It sounds very much as though you didn't design the program correctly before you started writing it. Also, a well structured

program can happily use GOSUBs to call specific routines without in any way looking messy; indeed, many programmers think that you should try to write your programs like that deliberately in the so-called 'modular' fashion.

Your best bet would be to buy one of the Basic extensions such as BC-Basic or Softchip etc, which allow you to use AUTO numbering, RENUMBER, DELETE and all the other program development commands that Commodore forgot! It will certainly be worthwhile if this is a common problem or you are intending to write a number of programs.

Ghost Buster

● I own a C16 and would like you to show me how to make these DATA statements draw a ghost using the Read statement. The DATA statements are as follows:

```
DATA 0, 64, 0, 0, 240, 0, 1, 76
DATA 0, 3, 19, 0, 51, 31, 128,
     123
DATA 31, 128, 127, 191, 0,
     63, 254, 0
DATA 15, 248, 0, 3, 248, 0, 1,
     252
DATA 254, 0, 1, 254, 0, 3,
     254, 0
DATA 3, 254, 0, 3, 254, 0, 3,
     254
DATA 0, 7, 255, 0, 15, 255,
     128
```

Guy Black, W. Yorks.

You've got confused somewhere, the DATA statements you give are for a SPRITE on either the 64 or 128. Since the C16 doesn't have any sprites (a sad oversight on Commodore's part!) you cannot use the values exactly as they stand since they will be meaningless to your computer.

The following program will give you the character you want, bearing in mind that a sprite is 24 by 21 pixels while a single UDG is only 8 by 8. The DATA statements must therefore be taken in the order 1st, 4th, 7th etc up to 22nd, then 2nd, 5th, 8th etc. The figure is therefore made up of 9 UDGs, but can be moved as a whole using a string variable; in this case called *GHOSTS*:

```
100  POKE 52, 56: POKE
     56,56 REM PROTECT UDG
     AREA
110  PRINT"[CLR]";: POKE
     65298, (PEEK(65298)
     AND 251) OR8
115  POKE 65299, (PEEK
     (65299) AND3) OR56
120  FOR CH = 14336 TO
     14407
130  READ GH:POKE CH, GH
140  NEXT CH
145  CHAR, 15, 10," "
150  GHOST$= "@ABC
     [DOWN] [LEFT] [LEFT]
     [LEFT] CDE [DOWN]
     [LEFT] [LEFT] [LEFT] FGH"
160  PRINTGHOST$
170  GETA$: IFA<>" "THEN
     170
180  GOTO 1000
200  DATA 0, 0, 1, 3, 51, 123,
     127, 63
210  DATA 64, 240, 176, 19,
     31, 31, 191, 254
220  DATA 0, 0, 0, 128, 128,
     0, 0
230  DATA 15, 3, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1,
     3
240  DATA 248, 248, 252,
     252, 254, 254, 254, 254
250  DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0,
     0,
260  DATA 3, 3, 3, 7, 15, 0, 0,
     0
270  DATA 254, 254, 254,
     255, 255, 0, 0, 0
280  DATA 0, 0, 0, 0, 128, 0,
     0, 0
1000 POKE 65298, 196 :
     POKE 65299, 208
1010 END
```

Note that this changes the first nine characters to the UDGs then displays the string.

Lines 110-115 alter the pointer to the character set using registers in the TED chip. Lines 120-140 copy the DATA into the character area. Once you have run the program and seen the 'ghost', press the space bar to return to the normal text screen and you can see how the string is displayed.

Cursor Cruncher

● I notice that you often give POKES to able or disable certain functions. I am trying to write an invoicing program and I think it would be a good idea to disable the cursor keys, RUN/STOP KEY, etc. Would it be worth my while buying the "Programmers' Reference Guide"? Does it contain all the clever pokes that you mention?
Paul Bird, Suffolk.

You can disable only those keys or commands which have some function in Basic as opposed to returning an ASCII value. Thus you can disable the RUN/STOP key but not the cursor keys. To cover both areas you need a short input routine which checks the keys as well as disabling the functions.

The Programmers' Reference Guide only gives you the necessary addresses, not the POKES that are associated with them. The following program will disable RUN/STOP and RESTORE and then shows an input routine that allows only alphanumeric characters plus DELETE and RETURN; all other characters are ignored. You can amend this to ignore any other specific characters if you need it.

```
10   PRINTCHR$ (8): REM
     Disable SHIFT/C=
20   POKE 808, 225: REM
     Disable RUN/STOP and
     RESTORE
1000 T$=""
1005 PRINT" [YEL] L [LEFT]
     [WHT]";
1010 GETA$: IF A$="" THEN
     1010
1020 IF A$=CHR$(13) THEN
     1070
1030 IF A$=CHR$(20) THEN
     T$=LEFT$ (T$,LEN(T$)
     - 1): GOTO 1060
     1060
1040 IF ASC (A$) <48 OR ASC
     (A$)>90 THEN 1005
1050 T$=T$+A$
1060 PRINTA$: GOTO 1005
1070 PRINT" ":RETURN
```

To use the input routine, **GOSUB 1000**. On returning from the routine, **T$** will contain the complete string that has just been input. It will allow deletion of mistakes, although don't attempt to delete more characters than you have typed.

Big Screen

● Could you explain to me, how to have more than one screen resident in memory, and then move from one to the other?

What I mean is, think of a map larger than the screen (4 screens up — 4 screens down — 4 screens left and right). How do I hold the information, so that I can scroll in all directions, using a joystick?
S. Reeves, Birmingham.

What you appear to be asking for is the ability to store a total of 81 screens in a 9×9 square which you can access as one BIG screen area. If I tell you that it would require about 5 MBytes of RAM to store that sort of area you will see that this is not a very practical way of doing it.

The way to be able to scroll in all directions is to have machine code which draws the next line (vertical or horizontal) on the edge of the screen in the direction you wish to move. By reducing the screen size to 38 cols by 24 rows, this new line is created in the 'hidden area' of the screen. When you scroll the screen the new data will appear.

It is rather difficult to be able to scroll in all 4 directions since you will have to do 2 sets of drawing when moving into a corner for example and write 4 different m/c routines to do the drawing and scrolling. Not only must you draw the line, but first work out what it is you are going to display to match the relevant border. Because the whole screen is refreshed every 1/25th of a second this will be very jerky if done using Basic, but page 128 of the Programmers Reference Manual will start you off if you want to experiment.

The scrolling registers are 53270 (X-direction) and 53265 (Y-direction). In both cases Bit 3 sets the screen size while Bits 0-2 set the scroll position. Note that sprites are not affected by scrolling the screen in this way so if required to move with the screen you must make separate provision for them.

Clever Pokes

● I've written a little wordprocessing program for my 128. Although it's nowhere near as good as the professional packages, I'd like to add some nice little touches. I'd like to give an option for cursor flash on/off and whether the keys will repeat or not. Can you help?
Rod Williams, Reading.

To control the cursor flash, you type POKE 2598,64 to stop it flashing, and POKE 2598,0 to start it again. By the way, this only works in 40-column mode as the address refers to the VIC chip and not the VDC chip as used for the 80-column display.

To control the key repeat function, you type POKE 2594,64 to turn off key-repeat, POKE 2594,0 makes only the spacebar and cursor keys repeat, and finally POKE 2594,128 sets everything back to normal.

TOMMY'S TIPS

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Hot Shots

By Mike Pattenden

What a month! Phew, all that World Cup action, has left me drained, I can tell you. Forty hours of televised football has just about worn out my TV. I must have missed out on about a week's sleep following the whole business, and we haven't reached the final yet.

● I certainly haven't lost any sleep over U.S. Gold's **World Cup Carnival** though, though they may have. There's been more fuss about that than England's third goal against West Germany in '66. The cause of it is that it isn't a particularly new game. In fact it's Arctic's football game, which appeared on *Now Games II*. A lot of retailers out there are pretty unhappy. A few even refused to take it when they found out. Bit of an own goal there I feel . . . .

● It's a while since I had anything new to tell you about my good friends at Domark. The house of good taste have landed themselves in the soup with the creators of **Spitting Image** . You may have noticed a game called **Spitting Images** on the Spectrum recently in the shops. Domark actually approached the writers before they put the game out to see if they wanted to do an official realease. The answer was, unsurprisingly, no. So they thought 'what the hell, we'll put it out anyway'. And lo and behold in came the writ by return post! The title has now been changed to **Split Personalities**, but the game is just the same — a children's educational program that originally featured dinosaurs . . .

● Don't think that Domark have cleaned up their act though, they can still get low. In fact this is possibly the lowest they've ever got, which is pretty low. They've been experimenting with some digitisers down there. What are they trying to digitise you ask, ingenuously? Would you believe me if I said **blue movies**? Shock! Wait till the Sun gets hold of that one — in fact I might even sell it to them . . . .

● It is for enterprises such as this that a book called **Children at Risk** has appeared. It's one of those terribly concerned, terribly Christian publications that purports that today's kids are all going to grow up to be psychopaths. Careful with that axe Eugene . . . .

● One thing the Sun have already got hold of is Probe's **Dirty Den** game. A bevvy of hacks (if that's not the collective name it should be) stampeded into the company's office demanding to know the truth behind the lies etc, and **Fergus McGovern**, Probe boss ex-Irish country and western guitarist, (fact!), told them he'd never heard of any Dirty Den or a programme called Eastenders.

● Fergus is a bit of a one for the blarney, so I don't know whether to believe his little tale about an **Amiga** Commodore sent him. It seems they wired up the power supply wrong (it was an American model) so when they turned the machine on there was a small puff of smoke and a ruined micro! Having heard the tales about Commodore I can well believe it . . . .

● The software industry is notorious for its inventiveness and entrepreneurism. No one more so that CRL's go-ahead young boss **Clement Chambers** whose first business venture was a brainwave he had one day at the opticians. How the hell can people decide what glasses they want if they can't see themselves when they try a pair of frames on? He thought squinting at the receptionist. Why don't I get the opticians to install video cameras so people can see themselves. Such a short-sighted brainwave had to flounder and it did . . . .

● You may remember the **Sick Sick Spaznik** picture we printed in the mag last month. It transpires there's a game to follow. I received a plaintive note last week informing me of it and asking 'Who wants the exclusive?' The answer guys is no-one. Sorry. And it seems no one wants the game either — even Domark turned it down . . . .

● Now a public information announcement. Rumours flying around the industry at the moment suggest **Beyond** are struggling. Denton Designs have put the breaks on three games they were programming for the company including **Dante's Inferno** (sounds like a hot one). The reason may have something to do with the disappearance of distribution company SID into that great Bermuda Software Triangle. What with them and the demise of Unitsoft I advise you to be very careful about mail order firms in future. . . .

● Just in case you number among my critics who maintain that my scandalmongering has no place in the mag and that I should be telling you all about the latest games and what programmers eat for breakfast (Andrew Braybrook has muesli) here's some inside info on the hot games already under development for the Christmas period. It's going to be one hell of a fight this year, with U.S. Gold working on **Gauntlet**, Domark posing questions like crazy to get **Trivial Pursuit** ready in time, and Ocean ploughing into their new arcade biggie **Terra Cresta**. Look out too for sequels to **Ghostbusters** and **Hacker** from Activision. There, don't say I never tell you anything . . .

● And with that I must leave you. Keep your ears open there's always a pint going for a good story. Next month a special holiday flavoured Hotshots. Hasta la vista . . . .



Why is this man pretending to be an ovenready roast chicken with all that bacofoil wrapped around him? Well in fact it's our deputy editor Bohdan Buciak fulfilling a lifetime's ambition to get into Hotshots shortly after completing the Paris Marathon. Bohdan completed the gruelling twenty-six miles (there's actually a bit more than that because Queen Victoria wanted to sit in a certain place to see the first competitive marathon) in four hours, just short of the world record time of two hours, eighteen minutes. He raised a cool £270 in the process for Save the Children, so well done BB. (pass me the Radox, Mike – dep. ed.)



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